

The American Convention
of Abolition Societies
1794-1829

The
American Convention
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY
AND IMPROVING
THE CONDITION OF
THE AFRICAN RACE

*Minutes, Constitution, Addresses,
Memorials, Resolutions, Reports,
Committees and Anti-Slavery Tracts*

Complete and Unabridged in Three Volumes

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Minutes of
The
American Convention
for Promoting the
Abolition of Slavery
and Improving the
Condition of the
African Race

Volume Two:
Eleventh to Seventeenth Convention
1806-1821

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MINUTES
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE ELEVENTH
AMERICAN CONVENTION
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY
AND
IMPROVING THE CONDITION
OF THE
AFRICAN RACE:
ASSEMBLED AT
PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF JANUARY, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT
HUNDRED AND SIX, AND CONTINUED BY ADJOURNMENTS
UNTIL THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF THE
SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRINTED BY KIMBER, CONRAD, AND CO.
1806.

MINUTES
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE ELEVENTH
AMERICAN CONVENTION
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, &c.

SELECT COUNCIL CHAMBER.

Philadelphia, January 13th, 1806.

THIS being the day appointed by the Constitution for the meeting of the American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c. number of Delegates from several Abolition Societies in the United States attended, and produced their credentials; by which it appears the following persons have been appointed to represent their respective Societies in this Convention, viz.

New-York..... Egbert Benson,
Thomas Eddy,
Rudolph Bunner,
Thomas Franklin,
Christopher M. Slocum,
Jacob Valentine,

Benjamin Clark,
John Onderdonk,
Adrian Hegeman,
Robert C. Cornell.

New-Jersey..... John Shotwell,
Gershom Craft,
John Griscom,
William Allinson,
Amos Cooper,
Paul Cooper,
Clement Hall.

Pennsylvania.... Timothy Paxson,
George Williams,
Benjamin Williams,
Thomas P. Cope,
Jacob S. Waln, jun.
Joseph R. Jenks,
Isaac T. Hopper.

Delaware..... Allen M'Lane,
Joseph Bringhurst, jun.
William Pryce,
Cyrus Newlin.

The Delegates present were....Christopher M. Slocum, Jacob Valentine, John Onderdonk, Adrian Hegeman, Robert C. Cornell, John Griscom, William Allinson, Gershom Craft, Amos Cooper, Timothy Paxson, Thomas P. Cope, Joseph R. Jenks, Isaac T. Hopper, Benjamin Williams, Jacob S. Waln, jun. George Williams, Allen M'Lane, Joseph Bringhurst, jun. William Pryce.

The Convention proceeded to the choice of Officers, when the following persons were duly elected, viz.:

GERSHOM CRAFT.....PRESIDENT.
 JACOB S. WAIN, jun....SECRETARY.
 THOMAS P. COPE.....TREASURER.

John Rasfield was appointed door-keeper.

Communications from the Abolition Societies of New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Providence (R. I.) were received and read, as follows :.....

To the Convention of Delegates, from the several Abolition Societies in the United States, to be held at Philadelphia, on the 13th day of January, 1806.

WE received with pleasure your last communication, in conjunction with your address to the people of colour; the latter we have caused to be carefully distributed....for the former, we return you our sincere thanks. Moved by the free spirit of Christianity, which extends an universal grace to all, and touched with an ardent desire of doing essential service to our country, by opposing in every possible way, consistent with law and justice, the destructive traffic in slaves, we trust we shall never be discouraged by difficulty, or deterred by danger : and proceeding with tempered zeal and cautious diligence, we hope (perhaps with too much confidence) yet to perceive rights and privileges really, and not nominally, common ; and our country freed from the bitter reproach of confining to a part, what the nature of civil society equally demands for all.

Though our standing committee have diligently laboured in the discharge of their duties, and have been successful in liberating many from illegal bondage, we have, nevertheless, cause to regret, that the secrecy and caution which the persons

employed in kidnapping have observed, has defeated their endeavours to detect their arts, and bring to punishment their crimes. The extreme difficulty of obtaining legal proof of this offence, arises, partly from the nature of the subject, and partly from the want of agents in the southern states to collect intelligence, which may either afford or lead to the discovery of proper testimony. We therefore submit this subject to the discretion of the Convention, and from our conviction that the system is carried on to an alarming degree, we think it merits their particular attention. It is with pleasure we announce to the Convention, that we have obtained a judgment versus Philip M. Topham, to the amount of sixteen thousand dollars, for an offence against the act of the United States prohibiting the employment of American vessels in the transportation of slaves. We think it not improper here to observe, that the defendant, in this suit, is a native of Rhode Island, and to suggest to the Convention the necessity of adopting some measure, either radical or palliative, for the suppression or restriction of the slave-trade in that state, where it is pursued as a principal branch of commerce, in defiance of the laws of the Union, and in contempt of the principles of humanity, without the fear of detection, or the veil of secrecy. Nor is this conduct only marked by the open violation of law, but every outrage and odium are abundantly heaped upon those friends of humanity, who have the boldness to hint disapprobation of the avaricious speculations in this unhallowed path to riches.

The School under our superintendance, is in an increasing state of prosperity, equal, if not superior, in the number of pupils, to any private seminary for the instruction of whites in this populous

city. It at present consists of about one hundred scholars, under the direction of the same man of colour who for some years past has had the superintendence of it. As from education the morals and manners receive their deepest tincture, we are the more solicitous upon this important object of our institution, and expect by the sure test of experience, to evince its great utility in forming the habits to industry, and the manners to gentleness. Though the progress of literary advancement of the people of colour, is greatest in this city (and of its state here only, we are accurately informed) yet from all sources of information we have been able to discover, we think it proportionably improving throughout the state: of their moral condition, though absolutely it may be worse than the lowest order of the native whites, yet when we regard their opportunities of instruction, and their few motives to exertion, we rather wonder they are not more depraved, than admire at their corruption; but from the growing prevalence of their religious tendencies, we have every reasonable ground to hope for a radical and permanent improvement in their state of morals. We perceive with pleasure, that the Acting Committee of the Convention have been requested to open a correspondence with the London committee of the society for the Abolition of the Slave-trade: acting as we do, from no interested views, nor influenced by national prejudices, we commend this liberal and comprehensive scheme, as striking at the root of the evil, and the extirpation of the vice. The inhibition of the traffic on the part of England, would not only prevent the addition of future victims, but improve the condition of her present stock; for the sole remaining mean of preserving a quantity sufficient for the purpose of colonial agriculture, will then be

to increase the number by internal population ; and that can only be done by relaxing the labours and extending the privileges of the slaves ; and their importance will rise with their utility, until they gradually throw off the badges of slavery, and finally, and without violence, obtain a legal interest in the soil. That this consequence will follow, we the more confidently believe, as it is the avowed opinion of the most profound and acute statesmen at this moment in England, who are now earnestly recommending this measure, both from its intrinsic justice, and as the last hope of preserving the West India colonies from falling under the rising empire of the blacks. The dispassionate voice of reason, and a feeling sense of interest therefore unite their influence to persuade the people of England to inhibit this dishonourable and destructive traffic, and should your Committee be able in the smallest degree to assist the exertions of our sister Society of that country, they will have abundant matter of honest exultation, and honourable pride.

With every inducement to continued exertion in a just cause, and with flattering prospects of eventual success, we commit the general objects of our institution to your protecting care, and we congratulate you upon the past success of your efforts.

The following persons are appointed delegates to represent this society in Convention, viz....Egbert Benson, Thomas Eddy, Rudolph Bunner, Thomas Franklin, Christopher M. Slocum, Jacob Valentine, Benjamin Clark, John Onderdonk, Adrian Hegeman, and Robert C. Cornell.

Signed on behalf of the New York Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves, &c.

VALENTINE SEAMAN, 1st V. President.

WALTER MORTON, Secretary.

New York, 17th December, 1805.

The Officers of the Society for the present Year are:....

Samuel L. Mitchell, President; Valentine Seaman, first Vice-President; Robert Bowne, second Vice-President; Walter Morton, Secretary; Charles Collins, Assistant Secretary; John Murray, jun. Treasurer; Christopher M. Slocum, Register; Nehemiah Allen, Chairman, and Christopher M. Slocum, Secretary of the Standing Committee; Joshua Underhill, Chairman, and William S. Burling, Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the School; Egbert Benson, William Johnson, Peter Jay Munro, Elisha W. King, Counsellors; Thomas Eddy, Chairman, and William Lawrence, Secretary of the Committee of Correspondence; John Onderdonk, Thomas Franklin, Henry Post, jun. Rudolph Bunner, Committee of Correspondence.

From the New Jersey Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

To the next American Convention, to be held in Philadelphia, on the 13th of First Month, 1806.

WE deem it proper to continue our annual communication, although from the imperfect representation of our several district meetings in the

present general meeting, and from the want of regular reports, we shall not have it in our power to enter much into detail.

The printed minutes of the last Convention have been duly received; the distribution whereof we hope will prove useful; and although we shall say but little in reply, to the excellent circular address, feeling our incompetency to make any considerable effort towards complying with its recommendations; yet we are deeply sensible of their intrinsic importance, more especially in regard to the education of the people of colour. On this subject we have a special committee appointed, the object of which is, to devise and mature a plan for the more effectual and general diffusion of the good to be derived from the literary, moral, and religious improvement of this people. It is with pleasure we observe, that the late law of this state, of which we transmitted a copy in our report of last year, is almost universally approved by the citizens.

Our acting committees have been instrumental in effecting the liberation of five persons within the last year, who were illegally detained in slavery. As many more cases remain under their care, which, in law and justice, are equally entitled to the rights of freedom.

In one of our districts, some progress has been made in visiting the families of blacks and people of colour, and in holding out to them such advice on the subjects of economy and morality as appeared necessary. From the partial extension of this care, salutary effects have apparently ensued.

We have appointed John Shotwell, Gershom Craft, John Griscom, William Allinson, Amos

Cooper, Paul Cooper, and Clement Hall, to represent this society in the ensuing Convention.

Signed in behalf and by direction of a general meeting of the society, held at Burlington 9th mo. (Sept.) 25, 1805.

WILLIAM GRIFFITH, President
JOHN GRISCOM, Secretary.

Officers of the Society.

PRESIDENT.....**WILLIAM GRIFFITH.**

VICE-PRES.... { **GERSHOM CRAFT,**
 { **WILLIAM NEWBOLD.**

TREASURER.....**WILLIAM COXE.**

SECRETARY.....**JOHN GRISCOM.**

*To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition
of Slavery.*

WE acknowledge the receipt of your communication of last year, and feel great pleasure in observing the attention with which you have conducted the various objects of your establishment. It is, however, a subject of serious regret, that these annual associations have of latter years been destitute of representatives from those states wherein the evil which we desire to eradicate most extensively prevails.

We are aware that exertions have not been wanting on your part to arouse the dormant spirit of the friends of enslaved fellow-men, but those exertions have proved unavailing. To what is this

to be attributed? Is it that the cause has been deserted by its former advocates? This supposition would involve the charge of a dereliction of principle on the part of some of the worthiest members of society, and we are therefore disposed to search for other motives in excuse for this apparent apathy.

We believe the true reason why ostensible and public measures are not pursued by the advocates of abolition in the southern states, will be found in a pretty general impression, that it would not, under existing circumstances, and in the present temper of the public mind, be expedient and useful. The extreme unpopularity of all combined attempts, has therefore introduced the substitute of individual interference, as particular urgencies require. Perhaps it may be questioned, whether, all things considered, this plan, aided by the gradual change in the public sentiment which may reasonably be expected, and unopposed by the clamour which a more systematic course would invite, may not be the most eligible. But however this may be, we apprehend it will be an enquiry well deserving your attention, whether, taking into view the improbability of obtaining a revival of the southern societies, and the state of those parts of our country, on which the measures of the Convention can, without their assistance, be expected to operate, any material injury would arise from a temporary suspension of your functions, and whether the expense which is incurred by your sittings, might not be more usefully applied to other interesting objects. Having thus introduced the matter to your notice, we do not wish to press it further, and shall cheerfully acquiesce in the conclusion to which your fuller consideration of it may lead.

In our several former addresses, we have communicated all the information in our power, on the different points to which you have directed our attention.

The education of the children of the people of colour, continues to engage our solicitude and care.

In the prosecution of our endeavours, we meet with much encouragement, as well from the progress of our pupils in literary improvements, as from the co-operation of the respectable part of the free people of colour. Sensible in themselves of the inconveniences arising from the want of education, they are anxious to avert the same misfortune from their offspring, and we trust the blessing of Providence will attend their well-meant endeavours. With regard to the moral improvement of those of the blacks who reside in the city and its vicinity, we wish it were in our power to give a more favourable account, but although there are not wanting many examples among them, of sobriety and decency of deportment, and great industry in their avocations, yet it is to be lamented, that the love of pleasure is most injuriously prevalent among a considerable class, and that the idleness and vice which are its concomitants, make them very often the subjects of our penal laws. The constant influx of numbers who have been before without any means of intellectual or moral improvement, greatly increases this evil; and it is a circumstance as disgraceful to the promoters of slavery, as it is encouraging to our labours, that a marked difference of character is observable between such as have and such as have not been favoured with these advantages.

The prosecutions against vessels and persons engaged in the slave-trade, which we mentioned to you formerly, are yet depending. We hope they will speedily be brought to a conclusion.

Although we have reason to believe that the practice of kidnapping has not wholly ceased, we have knowledge of no such recent well-authenticated instances as merit a recital.

Your addresses to the free blacks and people of colour, have been well received, and our meetings with them have been conducted with solemnity and decorum.

We conclude with informing you, that we have appointed Timothy Paxson, George Williams, Benjamin Williams, Thomas P. Cope, Jacob S. Waln, jun. Joseph R. Jenks, and Isaac T. Hopper, to represent us in the Convention this year, and we desire you to accept our earnest wishes, that your deliberations may be conducted with their usual harmony, and result in much good to the unhappy objects of our care.

Signed on behalf of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

Philadelphia, 1st mo. 6th, 1806.

THOMAS PARKER, V. President.

ATTEST,
JOHN BACON, SECRETARY.

The Officers of the Society for the present Year are:....

PRESIDENT.....DOCTOR BENJAMIN RUSH.

**VICE-PRES.... { ROBERT PATTERSON,
THOMAS PARKER**

**SECRETARIES... { JOHN BACON,
BENJAMIN WILLIAMS.**

TREASURER.....JOHN EVANS.

COUNSELLORS.

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| William Lewis, | John R. Coates, |
| William Rawle, | Daniel Smith, |
| John Hallowell, | George Fisher, |
| Walter Franklin, | George Vaux, |
| James Milnor, | Jacob S. Waln, jun. |
| Joseph Hopkinson, | Walker Reed. |
| Joseph Hemphill, | |

ELECTING COMMITTEE.

| | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Thomas Harrison, | Isaac Tatem Hopper, |
| Joseph Moore, | William Master, |
| Thomas Rogers, | Hanson Waters, |
| Isaac Pearson, | Edmund Kinsey, |
| Joseph Price, | Abraham Hilyard, |
| Samuel Smith, | Charles Townsend. |

*To the American Convention for Promoting the Abolition
of Slavery, and Improving the Condition of the African
Race.*

WE have received and read, with deep interest, your last circular address. The happy effects which you mention as the result of the labours of some societies, particularly in the advancement of the literary education of persons of colour, is

grateful to our hearts, and gives us encouragement to proceed in similar toils.

Mankind need continual incitements to the performance of their social duties : when we meet difficulties and troubles in the accomplishment of those plans of benevolence which do not immediately concern our personal welfare, we are too apt to wax cold ; but we hope there is not one man, within the limits of our societies, before whose heart and understanding your appeals will pass unheeded. We hope there is no one whom they will not rouse to new tasks of goodness....in whose bosom they will not rekindle the expiring flame of benevolence.

Although particular circumstances have occasioned our society to be less active, during the last three months, than formerly, yet we have not been altogether inattentive to the objects of our association. We have circulated through the several counties of this state, petitions for the gradual abolition of slavery, which, when signed, are to be forwarded to our Legislature now in session : we confess, notwithstanding our efforts in this cause, we have scarcely any hope that our request will receive a favourable reply. There always has been a majority of the members of our Legislature slave-holders, or so closely connected with the enemies of African liberty, that our petitions have never obtained a friendly or deliberate consideration. We fear this hostile spirit will not speedily subside.

The literary education of persons of colour has been the subject of our continued attention. We procured a suitable Tutor, who held a school, during the First-day afternoons of the summer and

fall, for all those who pleased to attend it. We have the satisfaction to observe, that his time, and our money, were not uselessly expended. Several children, and some grown persons made very considerable progress in the first branches of knowledge. Some of them read and write well....We believe the school-education of those unfortunate people is a matter of primary importance, because we know, when the mental powers are left to the operations of merely accidental cultivation, they more generally deviate into error, than rise through the mists of prejudice and passion to the light of truth.

We hope the moral and religious education of coloured persons in this state, and particularly within the borough of Wilmington, is progressing. The Africans and their descendants, in this town, with the pecuniary aid of their white brethren, have erected a spacious stone house for public worship. They hold regular meetings on first-days, and as far as we have yet learned, conduct themselves soberly. We believe their concentration in the form of a religious society, will occasion some improvement in their practice of the social and moral duties.

In conformity with your advice, we appointed a committee from our society, to hold a conference with them. That committee has reported a compliance with their appointment, and informed us that the result was very satisfactory to themselves. The meeting was held in the African worship-house. Your addresses of 1804 and 1805 were read, and such observations as circumstances required, were made on their various topics. The necessity of placing out their children as apprentices, to suitable tradesmen or farmers; and also

the solemn duty of having their marriage ceremonies legally performed, and faithfully adhering to them, were repeatedly and strongly enforced. Those subjects cannot be brought too frequently before them.

One slave has been manumitted, since our last report, by the aid of members of our society.

It is expected that suits will be instituted against William Goldsborough, William Reynolds, sen. and Henry Neal, for an attempt to kidnap Leven Carney, a free man of colour. This society has made enquiry in the matter, and is impressed with a belief that those persons intended to kidnap, and we hope to collect sufficient evidence to convict them legally of the crime. If our endeavours should be successful, we shall, in our next report, furnish you with a circumstantial history of the case.

But while we are combatting on the side of mercy and justice, we have to lament, that the people of South Carolina continue opposed to our cause. The friends of bleeding Africa were consoled, for two years, with a hope that the legislature of that state would be so far influenced by principles of humanity, or by the indignant feelings of the citizens of other states, or by correct views of their own interests, as to revoke the law which authorizes their trade in the flesh and blood of their fellow-men. But alas! in violation of the best sentiments of the human heart, in defiance of all that is honourable or dignified amongst rational and moral beings, the legislature of that ill-fated state has decreed that its citizens shall be permitted to continue their system of plunder, desolation, and murder, against the defenceless and innocent Africans! Can any

thing be done to save those unhappy people from the fangs of the wolves and the tygers which our countrymen are sending amongst them? Would it not be useful to stigmatize their odious traffic by publishing in the newspapers of all the northern states, the names of the traders in human blood, and the number of slaves annually imported by them? Would it not be wise to petition Congress to pass a law exacting a duty of ten dollars for each slave imported, and by a proper preamble marking the trade with the strongest language of abhorrence? We propose these serious subjects for your consideration.

The suit mentioned in our last report, as continued for further evidence, has been discontinued in consequence of the clopement of the principal witness.

We have placed in the hands of our delegates fifty dollars, which we have directed them to pay to the Treasurer of the Convention, towards the establishment of a general fund. If our treasury were rich, we should have transmitted a larger sum; but we must be content to regulate our benevolent feelings by the limits of our means.

We have appointed William Pryce, Cyrus Newlin, Joseph Bringhurst, jun. and Allen M'Lane, to represent us in the next Convention.

The following are the present Officers of our Society:...

PRESIDENT.....WILLIAM PRYCE,
 VICE-PRES.....ALLEN M'LANE,
 TREASURER.....WILLIAM SEAL,
 SECRETARY.....JOSHUA PIERCE.

ACTING COMMITTEE.

Cyrus Newlin,
Jacob Alrich,

|| William Poole,
Isaac H. Starr.

With sincere desires for the prosperity of the cause in which you are engaged, we are your friends and fellow-labourers.

Signed by order of the Abolition Society of Delaware.

WILLIAM PRYCE, *President.*
JOSHUA PEIRCE, *Secretary.*

Wilmington, 1st mo. 8th, 1806.

Providence, First Month 2d, 1806.

To the American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

ESTEEMED FRIENDS,

WE duly received the printed copies of the minutes of your proceedings last year, with your address to the people of colour, and that to this society. The observations, the advices, and the information therein, being pertinent and interesting, are to our satisfaction, and we hope may excite renewed attention to the objects of our benevolent institutions. However desirable it would be to us to have a personal representation at your next meeting, we must submit to circumstances which at present seem not to promise that satisfaction. It appears, therefore, the more necessary that we take this method to convey to you more

fully some ideas which we just hinted in our letter last year to your standing committee.

The act of Congress of 1800, relative to the slave-trade, by section 1st, gives the whole forfeiture of the vessel to the person complaining; under which, by the owners complaining of themselves, through any of their friends, they elude the law, subjecting themselves merely to an inconsiderable expense. By section 2d and 3d, of the same act, the crime of being employed on board our own, or foreign vessels, is liable to be prosecuted only by indictment, and as in all criminal cases or prosecutions, it is necessary to have witnesses personally present, conviction is thereby rendered extremely difficult, and often impracticable, by reason of the witnesses being at a distance, and often sailors who cannot be detained on shore to wait the trial. Whereas, had the sanction been a pecuniary penalty, recoverable in a civil action, written evidence would have been admitted, and much more easily obtained and perpetuated.

We would suggest to the consideration of the Convention the propriety of an application to Congress for such an alteration of the law as to cause some part of the forfeiture to go to the United States in all cases, and to facilitate the procuring of evidence as aforesaid; and whether a further penalty excluding from all office under Congress, or the United States, those who shall in any way be concerned in the trade, be not eligible. If the Convention should judge proper to make any application, either publicly, or more privately through some of the members, for any or all these alterations, we shall be willing to unite, by addressing our members to unite their influence to effect the same. They, in answer to our application by let-

ter last year on the subject of the Louisiana petition for a repeal of the act prohibiting the importation of slaves into that territory, gave us satisfaction in their cordially uniting with us, and information, that in their opinions, there were not ten members in Congress who would countenance the petition in that respect.

We have appointed a committee for the purpose of collecting essays and tracts relative to the history of the rise and progress, and present state of slavery in the United States, which the Convention have in view to have published, and directed them to correspond with your Acting Committee thereon, if occasion requires, and to report progress.

Subscriptions have been made to raise funds for opening an evening school for the people of colour in this town and vicinity, of all descriptions who choose to attend during the winter, and we have appointed a committee to make application to the town of Providence, to extend their benevolent plan of education of the whites at public expence to the people of colour.

We are not without apprehension that there has been too much relaxation in regard to publishing tracts and essays on the impolicy and injustice of slavery, and that its tendency has been to lessen that repugnance in the public mind, especially of the young and rising generation, which ought to be kept up by every proper means, to do away the enormous evil. Attempts have been made by interested people to propagate the erroneous notion that the blacks are absolutely a different species from the whites; but whenever this has been brought to public view, it has been successfully

opposed by the advocates of the doctrine that "He that giveth life and breath, and all things, hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth," to the refutation of that notion so contrary to this Christian doctrine and true philosophy.

We are your friends.

Signed in behalf of said society, by

DAVID HOWELL, *President.*

The following persons are appointed a Committee of Arrangement, to wit, John Onderdonk, Timothy Paxson, John Griscom, William Pryce; to whom the preceding communications are referred, to consider and report thereon. The committee is also instructed to inquire into and make report on such other subjects as may be deemed proper for the consideration of this Convention.

A communication from Peter Williams jun. a person of colour, dated New-York, January 6th, 1806, was received, read, and ordered to lay on the table.

The following persons were appointed a Committee to examine the Treasurer's Account, and make report thereon; to wit, Jacob Valentine and William Allinson.

Then adjourned till to-morrow afternoon at 4 o'clock.

January 14th, 4 o'clock P. M.

Convention met, pursuant to adjournment;

MEMBERS PRESENT:

GERSHOM CRAFT....PRESIDENT.

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Christopher M. Slocum, | George Williams, |
| Jacob Valentine, | Benjamin Williams, |
| John Onderdonk, | Thomas P. Cope, |
| Adrian Hegeman, | Jacob S. Waln, jun. |
| Robert C. Cornell, | Joseph R. Jenks, |
| John Griscom, | Isaac T. Hopper, |
| William Aliinson, | Joseph Bringhurst, jun. |
| Amos Cooper, | Cyrus Newlin, |
| Paul Cooper, | William Pryce, |
| Timothy Paxson, | Allen M'Lane. |

The minutes of the Acting Committee were read and approved.

The Committee of Arrangement makes the following report :....

The Committee to whom was referred the Addresses from the several Abolition Societies,

REPORT, that after deliberately considering the several communications submitted to them, they agree to propose,

1st, That a committee consisting of one delegate from each society be appointed to prepare the draft of a circular address to the abolition societies in the United States.

2d, That it be recommended to the respective societies, in their separate capacities, to endeavour, as far as may be in their power, to extend such

aid to our brethren in the southern states as they may want, in the prosecution of our views; and that they use all suitable means for procuring agents in those parts, for the purpose of bringing to justice persons who have in any way incurred the penalties of the laws against slavery and the slave-trade.

3d, That the subject of education be again earnestly recommended, particularly as it relates to the moral culture of the blacks; and as a powerful means of promoting this important object, that suitable advice be frequently administered to them in their families and in larger assemblies convened for that purpose.

4th, That the proposition from Rhode Island, relative to an alteration in the slave laws, be taken into consideration by the Convention.

5th, That the first section of the third article of the Constitution be altered, so as to stand as follows:....The Convention shall meet triennially at Philadelphia on the second Monday in January.

Signed by order of the Committee,

JOHN ONDERDONK, *Chairman.*

The Committee appointed to examine the Treasurer's Account, report, they have considered and found it correct.

Resolved, that the report of the Committee of Arrangement be read by paragraphs.

The first paragraph thereof was read and approved.

The second was read, and adopted.

The third and fourth were also adopted.

The fifth was adopted unanimously, with this addition, that the Constitution of this Convention be conformable thereto.

Resolved, that the several abolition societies in the United States be earnestly requested to prepare and circulate memorials among the friends of emancipation for their signatures, soliciting the enactment of a law for prohibiting the importation of slaves into the United States after the year 1807; and that the same be presented to Congress at their session in that year.

On motion resolved, that a committee consisting of one delegate from each society represented in this Convention be appointed to draft a circular address, and that the second and third propositions of the report of the Committee of Arrangement, and the preceding resolution respecting the memorial to Congress, be referred to the same committee. The following persons are appointed:....Adrian Hegeman, William Allinson, Joseph Bringhurst, jun. and Thomas P. Cope.

Resolved, that the fourth proposition of the report of the Committee of Arrangement be referred to Thomas P. Cope, Timothy Paxson, and Jacob S. Waln, jun. to report by memorial or otherwise.

The Convention proceeded to the appointment of the Acting Committee for the ensuing three years.

New York....John Onderdonk. New Jersey.... John Griscom. Pennsylvania....Thomas P. Cope, Joseph R. Jenks, Timothy Paxson, Jacob S. Waln, jun. Delaware....Joseph Bringhurst, jun.

Adjourned till to-morrow afternoon at 4 o'clock.

January 15th, 4 o'clock P. M.

Convention met, pursuant to adjournment;

MEMBERS PRESENT:

GERSHOM CRAFT, PRESIDENT.

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Christopher M. Slocum, | George Williams, |
| Jacob Valentine, | Benjamin Williams, |
| John Onderdonk, | Thomas P. Cope, |
| Adrian Hegeman, | Jacob S. Waln, jun. |
| Robert C. Cornell, | Isaac T. Hopper, |
| John Griscom, | Joseph Bringhurst, jun. |
| William Allinson, | William Pryce, |
| Amos Cooper, | Cyrus Newlin, |
| Paul Cooper, | Joseph R. Jenks. |
| Timothy Paxson, | |

A communication was received from John Shotwell, informing the Convention of his inability to meet them.

The Committee on the Circular Address made a report, which was read and approved, as follows:

To the.....Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

IN pursuance of the practice of former Conventions, and in obedience to the dictates of our own feelings, we affectionately salute you.

In the course of our deliberations on the impressive subjects submitted to our consideration, it has been thought adviseable to recommend that you endeavour to establish agencies among the friends of emancipation in the southern states, in order to obtain correct and early information of persons who incur the penalties of the laws respecting slavery, and that you have prompt and sufficient aid in prosecuting of such offenders.

We learn with deep regret, that, independent of the cruel practice of kidnapping, a clandestine traffic in the human species is prosecuted to a considerable extent, by the citizens of one of the eastern states. Some of the wretched subjects of this commerce are conveyed to the southward, and there sold. The establishment therefore of a correspondence with suitable persons, whose business it should be to acquire and communicate intelligence respecting the authors and abettors of these transactions would probably be the means of bringing some of them to justice.

Repeatedly and earnestly as we have recommended the subject of education to your attention, we cannot forbear renewing the interesting call. Much has been done, yet much remains to be accomplished; and it is in vain that you extend the boon of freedom to the slave, unless you qualify him to become useful to himself, his family, and his country.

As the period is not far distant when Congress may constitutionally prohibit the further importation of slaves, we recommend that you pursue timely measures for addressing them by petition and otherwise, requesting them to pass such laws as shall effectually put an end to the inhuman commerce.

You will perceive by our minutes that we have judged it expedient so to modify the Constitution as to make our stated meetings triennial. Should special meetings be at any time deemed necessary, the means for calling them are provided by the Constitution. We trust, however, that this alteration will not produce any abatement of your zeal; your work is not finished; nearly one fifth of the nation drag the galling chain of slavery, and look up to the friends of emancipation, for liberty and protection. There is therefore a vast field yet open for the exercise of your humanity; and we intreat you by the love of justice....by the endearing ties of fellowship....by the sacred precepts of Christianity....that you abandon not the cause, until the rulers of the land shall practice what they teach, that they "hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights: that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

The committee appointed to consider the proposition from the Providence Society, presented the following memorial, which was read, adopted, and directed to be signed and attested by the President and Secretary, and forwarded to Congress by the Acting Committee.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

IT is to us a subject of deep regret that circumstances once more command an address to you in the language of solicitation. In thus calling your attention from objects of importance to those which may perhaps be deemed of inferior moment,

we are not actuated by an ignoble passion for renown....far otherwise. We are perfectly content to pass down the stream of time unnoticed by the world, unrewarded by celebrity. If the purposes which we hold up to view for attainment, are but accomplished, entire satisfaction will be ours, though fame records not our actions. The existence of vice, and a wish to eradicate it, have alone drawn us from the obscurity of private life.

Sources of affliction still force themselves upon the feelings of your memorialists in viewing the land of their nativity and affection. Though the horizon in some places has resumed its native lustre, dark clouds intercept its splendour in others. We still hear the clanking fetters of slavery in the dominions of liberty; and we hear them with increasing noise. That the cause of this injurious change should be legalized, we can but lament. We ask not the interposition of Congress: though it is believed to be within their inclination, we know it is beyond their power. The object of this memorial is the removal of other evils.

Eminence in the slave-trade has long disgracefully distinguished a number of the citizens of an eastern state. Regardless of their own or their country's reputation, they have long been the inhuman forgers of chains for the sons of Africa. By their means the American flag still continues to flutter on an insulted territory, the witness of the greatest enormities. Parents are torn from children; husbands from wives: in a word, thousands of freemen are annually dragged into slavery, through the instrumentality of the vessels, the citizens, and the produce of the United States. And this too in undisguised contravention of the laws of their country! To one of the practices to

which the African traders of the place alluded to have resorted for escaping even a chance of punishment, we beg leave to call the attention of the wisdom of the Union. We say chance of punishment; for he who there dares to step forward to assert the laws of the land, hazards his life.

It is declared in the first section of an Act of Congress passed May 10, 1800, unlawful for any citizen of the United States, or other person residing within the United States, directly or indirectly to hold any right or property in any vessel employed in the transportation of slaves from one foreign country to another; and any right or property belonging as aforesaid, shall be forfeited, and may be libelled and condemned for the use of the person who shall sue for the same, &c. Under this act, giving the whole forfeiture to the informer, the vessels of those who incur its penalties are libelled and condemned by collusion with their friends. The defendants, by this mockery of justice, purge their vessels from crime, subjecting themselves merely to an inconsiderable expense. From unquestionable authority we are assured of several evasions of this description. To prevent them, and strengthen the provisions of the acts generally upon the subject of the slave-trade, we would suggest to Congress the propriety of such an alteration in the law as to entitle the United States in all cases to a proportion of the condemned article; and annexing to the persons engaged in this traffic (since shame is a powerful motive to action) a disqualification to hold any office under the United States.

Your memorialists would further suggest another alteration of the penal code. By the same law of 1800, voluntarily serving on board vessels em-

ployed in the transportation of slaves from one foreign country to another, is declared unlawful. The punishment of this offence is directed to be by indictment. By the existing law, criminal prosecutions can only be supported, with some few exceptions, by *viva voce* testimony. The accused upon the trial must be confronted by the witnesses against him. To seamen the knowledge of infractions of the part of the law last alluded to, is usually confined. Persons whose avocations constantly lead them from their homes to distant places; and whose attendance at trials it is of course generally impossible to secure, without subjecting them to the palpable injustice of confinement, or an inconvenience equally great, that of compelling by surety their presence at a particular day; on which, unexpectedly, and unavoidably, they may be hundreds of miles from the scene of trial. This difficulty it is apprehended would be obviated by removing, from written testimony, the objection to which it is now liable in criminal prosecutions, under the law of 1800, and giving it in such cases the force which it possesses in civil actions. We have not been able to discover any objection to depositions fairly taken in the presence of prosecutor and prosecuted. It is, however, with great deference submitted to the superior judgment of Congress.

We hope that in thus concisely urging upon your notice some apprehended defects in the laws for the discouragement of the worst of crimes, impertinence will not be discoverable. Though the prospect is brightening on the eye of humanity, though the period rapidly advances, in which Congress will acquire a capacity of performing by a single unexpensive act, more good than perhaps ever fell to the lot of a legislature to accomplish,

we have not, hence, conceived ourselves at liberty to view with inactive zeal present excesses, to remedy which a competent authority exists.

Resolved, that the Acting Committee be instructed to convey to William Wilberforce, member of the British Parliament, the high esteem which this Convention entertains for his character, and its thanks for his long, persevering, and benevolent endeavours to obtain an abolition of the traffic in slaves.

Resolved by the Convention unanimously, that, in addition to the provision in the sixth article of the Constitution, for the calling of special meetings of the Convention, the Acting Committee be authorized to call such meetings in cases of emergency.

On motion, resolved, that the Acting Committee have printed six hundred copies of the Minutes of this Convention, and as many as they shall judge necessary of the Circular Address; and that they have them transmitted in the usual proportions to the different Abolition Societies.

Resolved, that the Acting Committee present the thanks of this Convention to the President of the Select Council of the city of Philadelphia, for the use of their chamber during this session.

Resolved, that said Committee be directed to give the several Abolition Societies three months previous notice of the time of meeting of the Convention, and that they request each society to en-

join its delegates to attend the meetings thereof,
during the whole session.

Resolved, that such of the acts of the legislatures
of the eastern states, on the subject of slavery, as
are contained in a pamphlet received in the year
from the Providence Society for the Aboli-
tion of Slavery, and have not hitherto been pub-
lished by order of the Convention, be published
with the Minutes of the proceedings of the Con-
vention of this year, in the manner which may be
deemed most proper by the Acting Committee.

Adjourned sine die.

Published by order of the Convention,

JACOB S. WALN, Jun. SEC'RY.

Philadelphia, January 15th, 1806.

APPENDIX.

The following is the Communication received from
Peter Williams, jun. referred to in the preceding
Minutes.

*To the Convention of Delegates from the different Abolition
Societies in the United States, to be held in Philadelphia
the 13th of January, 1806.*

THE indefatigable zeal of the Abolition Society, in liberating from bondage an oppressed people, and the means which they have made use of to promote their happiness, highly merit the grateful acknowledgement of the African race, and the approbation of every candid discerning mind. The influence which they have had in ameliorating our distresses, and redressing the injuries done us, is obvious, on a review of the deplorable situation to which we were reduced by those whose insatiate thirst for sordid gold, superseding every other consideration, rendered them insensible to the feelings of human nature. Torn from our families, our friends, and from all we held most dear, we were dragged to a distant, and inhospitable shore, and there doomed to wear out a miserable existence in the service of cruel and imperious masters, in whose estimation we were merely as beasts of burthen, destined by fate to a state of slavery. In this abject, and forlorn condition, stimulated alone by the scourge to excessive labour; worn down by fatigue, without enjoying the necessaries of life; held in contempt, as a degradation to the hu-

man species ; enveloped in ignorance, by the base policy of our tyrants, and deprived of hope in so wretched a condition ; we oft called to remembrance our native land, and with deep regret mourned the loss of those darling comforts which endear life to man, and in paroxysms of rage were ready to curse the hour which severed us from happiness, and placed us under the dominion of men who delight in the sufferings of their fellow-creatures. But ere long that humanity which is so conspicuous in the character of the FRIENDS, interposed in our behalf ; they, with other humane men, of different denominations, saw, and sympathized in our sorrows, and rising above the mean prejudices imbibed against us, united their efforts in order to rescue from slavery and misery the unfortunate sons of Africa. Innumerable were the obstacles opposed to this plan by self-interested men ; but in despite of them all, their munificence and perseverance sat thousands at liberty, and are daily casting off the shackles of numbers more. Although the restoration of our liberty is an act of genuine benevolence, had their kindness extended no farther, we should again have fallen, helpless and unprotected, an easy prey to the perfidiousness of our former oppressors. Happily for us, this was not the case : happily for us, that our benefactors esteem it a pleasure, not only to gain, but to secure our freedom. When the insidious kidnapper endangers our rights, they fly to our assistance, by which means hundreds of freed men have been saved from a second bondage ; and it is through their instrumentality that equal justice is distributed to the black and the white. Launched as it were into a new element, illiterate, and inexperienced, to what dangers might we have been exposed, had we not found a guide, faithful and judicious, in these humane men. They knew full

well, that ignorance is the fosterer of vice, and that vice is the bane of happiness. With a view therefore to prevent these evil consequences, and elevate us to a state of respectability in society, they inculcated by precept and example, the lessons of morality, industry, and economy ; and the better to promote their laudable designs, they erected schools to enlighten our minds by the genial rays of literature. To one of these institutions I am indebted for my education, which, though not great, is sufficient to convince me of its great utility. The result of these measures afford a scene worthy the contemplation of a philosophic mind, which must behold with pleasing transport, the African race emerging from complicated misery, to the full enjoyments of civilized life ; the beams of literature dispersing the clouds of ignorance, and the gradual discardment of the illiberal opinions entertained against part of the human family. Notwithstanding I regret that many, too many, freed men, have unhappily fallen victims to vice ; yet we behold their number surpassed by those who uphold respectable stations in life, and far surpassed by those whose frugality and integrity have ranked them in society as useful men : we behold also numbers instructed in the rudiments of learning, and some who already tread the flowery paths of science ; while, in all classes of society we behold numerous countenances assuming a friendly aspect towards us. From this pleasing prospect, may I not anticipate a time when posterity shall set at nought all distinctions between the inalienable rights of black men, and white. Hence it may easily be discovered that we have reaped infinite advantages from the Abolition Society, for which, gratitude loudly demands an acknowledgement. In the name, therefore, of my fellow-countrymen, and in behalf of myself, I return you thanks, ye venerable, ye phi-

lanthropic men, for espousing the cause of an injured, an oppressed, and a despised race, and for all the benefits and advantages we have derived from your unabating zeal and good will towards us.

PETER WILLIAMS, Jun.

New York, January 6th, 1806.

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.
June Session, 1774.

An Act Prohibiting the Importation of Negroes into this Colony.

WHEREAS the inhabitants of America are generally engaged in the preservation of their own rights and liberties, among which that of personal freedom must be considered as the greatest; and as those who are desirous of enjoying all the advantages of liberty themselves, should be willing to extend personal liberty to others:

Therefore be it enacted by this General Assembly, and by the authority thereroft it is enacted, That for the future no negro or mulatto slave shall be brought into this colony: And in case any slave shall hereafter be brought in, he or she shall be and are hereby rendered immediately free, so far as respects personal freedom and the enjoyment of private property, in the same manner as the native Indians.

Provided nevertheless, That this law shall not extend to servants of persons travelling through this colony, who are not inhabitants thereof, and who carry them out with them when they leave the same.

Provided also, That nothing in this act shall extend, or be deemed to extend, to any negro or mulatto slave, belonging to any inhabitant of either of the British colonies, islands or plantations, who shall come into this colony with an intention to settle or reside for a number of years therein; but such negro or mulatto, so brought into this colony by such person inclining to settle or reside therein, shall be and remain in the same situation, and subject in like manner to their master or mistress, as they were in the colony or plantation from whence they removed.

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.
October Session, 1779.

*An Act Prohibiting Slaves being Sold out of the State
against their Consent.*

WHEREAS tolerating strangers to purchase negro or mulatto slaves in this state, and carry them off either by land or water against their consent, to perpetuate their slavery in foreign parts, remote from their friends and acquaintance, is against the rights of human nature, and tends greatly to aggravate the condition of slavery, which this General Assembly is disposed rather to alleviate, till some favourable occasion may offer for its total abolition: *Be it therefore enacted by this General Assembly, and by the authority thereof it is enacted,* That in case any stranger or foreigner, or any person or persons whoever, shall presume to purchase, and in consequence of such recent title, or of any other right, title or claim whatsoever, shall forcibly or fraudulently attempt to carry off, either by land or water, out of the

bounds and jurisdiction of this state, against their consent, any negro or mulatto slave or slaves heretofore residing in this state, such attempt shall operate against the person or persons making the same, either by themselves or any other person or persons acting under them, and in their behalf, to a total defeazance and forfeiture of all their right, title or claim, to such slave or slaves.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That upon its being alledged and proved by such slave or slaves, or any other person in his or their behalf, before any one Justice of the Peace in this state, that such an attempt hath been made as aforesaid, it shall be in the power and become the duty of such Justice forthwith to give under his hand and seal, to such slave or slaves, a certificate of his or their total emancipation; by virtue of which, such slave or slaves shall become forever thereafter as perfectly liberated from the power of the persons concerned in such attempt, as though he or they had never been in bondage.

And lest the said slaves should by fraud, threats or duress, be prevailed upon hastily to declare their consent to such sale and exportation, when at the same time, in truth and reality, entirely averse thereto, *Be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That nothing shall be deemed sufficient evidence of such their consent, but a certificate, signed by two or more Justices of the Peace, in the town where such slave or slaves may reside, to the following purport, to wit:*

We the subscribers, Justices of the Peace in the town of in the county of and state of Rhode Island and Providence plantations, do hereby certify all persons whom it may concern,

that, a slave, about years of age, heretofore belonging to, and usually serving in this town, hath appeared before us at two several times, three days asunder, in the absence of owner, and, under no apparent restraint or duress, hath fully at each time declared consent to be sold to, of the state of, in the county of, and town of, and to be forthwith carried to said town to reside with the said in a state of slavery. Witness our hands. Dated this day of, in the year of our Lord

Provided always, That in case any negro or mulatto slave shall become notoriously unfaithful and villainous, and the owner or owners thereof shall alledge and make proof of the same, at the General Sessions of the Peace, in the county where such slave or slaves reside, and obtain judgment against him or them, it shall and may be lawful for the owner or owners to export said delinquent slave or slaves to any place within the jurisdiction of the United States. And a copy of the said judgment, annexed to the bill of sale, shall justify his or their exportation accordingly.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That no person, owner of any slave or slaves in this state, shall sell or dispose of him or them to be carried out of the state, on any pretence whatever, contrary to the true intent and meaning hereof; and that if any person or persons in this state shall be lawfully convicted of selling or disposing of any such slave or slaves, in manner as aforesaid, he or they shall forfeit and pay the sum such slave or slaves shall be valued at; the one half thereof to and for the use of this state, and the other half to and for the use of the informer

who shall prosecute the same; to be tried and recovered before any court of law in this state proper to try the same.

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.
February Session, 1784.

An Act Authorizing the Manumission of Negroes, Mulattoes and others, and for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery.

WHEREAS all men are entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and the holding mankind in a state of slavery, as private property, which has gradually obtained by unrestrained custom and the permission of the laws, is repugnant to this principle, and subversive of the happiness of mankind, the great end of all civil government:

Be it therefore enacted by this General Assembly, and by the authority thereof it is enacted,
That no person or persons, whether negroes, mulattoes or others, who shall be born within the limits of this state, on or after the first day of March, A. D. 1784, shall be deemed or considered as servants for life, or slaves; and that all servitude for life, or slavery of children, to be born as aforesaid, in consequence of the condition of their mothers, be and the same is hereby taken away, extinguished and for ever abolished.

MINUTES
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE TWELFTH
AMERICAN CONVENTION
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY
AND
IMPROVING THE CONDITION
OF THE
AFRICAN RACE:
ASSEMBLED
.AT PHILADELPHIA,

On the Ninth day of January, One thousand Eight Hundred and Nine,
and continued by adjournments until the Twelfth
day of the same month, inclusive.

PHILADELPHIA :
PRINTED BY J. BOUVIER, No. 6, CYPRESS ALLEY

.....
1809.

Twelfth Convention/443

MINUTES
OF
THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE TWELFTH
AMERICAN CONVENTION
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, &c.

SELECT COUNCIL CHAMBER.

Philadelphia, January 9th 1809.

THIS being the day appointed by the Constitution for the meeting of the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c. one member from New-Jersey and several from New-York and Pennsylvania appeared. But it being suggested that a more numerous attendance might be expected to-morrow, it was agreed to adjourn until the 10th inst. at 10 o'clock in the forenoon.

January 10th.

Delegates from several Abolition Societies appeared and took their seats, Thomas P. Cope

was appointed chairman, and Benjamin Williams secretary, pro tempore.

From the credentials produced it appeared that the following persons had been appointed to represent their respective Societies in this Convention, viz.

From New-York.... Thomas Eddy,
Allen Sheppard,
Abraham Barker,
Adrian Hegeman,
William Slosson,
Elisha Morrel,
Rudolph Bunner,
Henry Post, junior.
Samuel Hicks,
Aaron H. Palmer.

New-Jersey.... Amos Cooper,
Benjamin Rulon,
William Newbold,
Richard Hartshorne,
Thomas M. Potter,
John Potts,
Andrew Elston,

Pennsylvania.. Timothy Paxson,
Roberts Vaux,
Thomas P. Cope,
Joseph R. Jenks,
Stephen Pike,
Benjamin Williams,
Joseph Parker.

Delaware..... Cyrus Newlin,
Samuel Nicols,

Joseph Bringhurst, junior,
Isaac H. Starr,
William Poole,
William Pryce.

The Delegates present were....A. Barker, S. Hicks, A. H. Palmer, A. Cooper, W. Newbold, R. Vaux, T. P. Cope, S. Pike, B. Williams, J. Parker, C. Newlin, J. Bringhurst, jun. I. H. Starr, W. Poole, W. Pryce.

The Convention proceeded to the choice of officers, when the following persons were duly elected ;

TIMOTHY PAXSON.....PRESIDENT.
THOMAS P. COPE.....TREASURER.
JOHN BACON.....SECRETARY.

John Rasfield was appointed door-keeper.

The president and secretary being absent, the chairman and secretary pro. tem. were requested still to officiate.

A communication was read from the Abolition Society of New-York. During the reading Timothy Paxson appeared, and at the conclusion thereof, being informed of his election to the office of president, took the chair.

Communications were also read from the Abolition Societies of New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, as follows :....

To the Convention of Delegates from the several Abolition Societies in the United States, to be holden at Philadelphia on the ninth day of January in the Year 1809.

AFTER the lapse of nearly three years since the meeting of the last Convention, we rejoice in the opportunity of addressing you, their successors.

The occasion of your assembling brings together the representatives of associations the most benevolent in their origin, and therefore requiring the most steady perseverance in the objects of their pursuit, as well as the most deliberate, wise, and efficient measures for carrying them into execution. The man has small claims to a character for genuine philanthropy or deep reflection, who habitually declaiming on his vigilance for the freedom of those of his own colour, can yet see with indifference, multitudes around him in slavery, who have either been wickedly dragged from another climate, or born in our own soil, with natural rights, feelings, and perhaps capacities equal to his own.

While we are consistent in the love of free institutions we obey a sort of pre-eminent demand in extending their benefits to the more helpless and unfortunate. So much of the public happiness depends on domestic virtues, and so much of the excellency of legislative proceedings on the correct views of subordinate associations, that the importance of our undertakings swells into magnitude, and we justly consider ourselves under a responsibility not to be disregarded as light, nor despised as trivial. Thus while we felicitate ourselves on being under Providence instrumental in meliorating the condi-

tion of many Blacks, and in augmenting their enjoyments, we find increased incentives to carry into more complete execution what has been so beneficially begun.

But permit us more explicitly to state, that we do not consider zeal as the only requisite to the accomplishment of our objects. Nice discrimination is necessary respecting the subjects to be flattered with the hopes of immediate emancipation; as on the one hand we should suffer no one to linger in slavery whom the laws have pronounced free, so on the other we should never outstrip the laws by making inroads into private right, or improperly interrupting domestic tranquility. Hence the first object is to give perfection to our statutes regulating slavery, and the next to see their emancipating provisions strictly and equitably enforced.

Much may still be done in giving a more commendable form to the acts of the different states making provision on this head and we cannot but esteem it of primary importance that such hints should occasionally be thrown out by those who have made this the subject of their investigation as may lead our Legislature to the adoption of measures best calculated to the attainment of that object. Besides the benevolent purposes for which we have associated should be placed in so amiable a light as to draw the influential into a cheerful co-operation, while such prudence should temper our conduct as not to create among the neutral part of society any asperities whereby unnecessary opposition might be excited, unwarrantable principles awakened into more activity, the purity of our motives be

arraigned at the bar of public censure, and the best efforts of our benifcent establishments be rendered pernicious or nugatory. These thoughts we have seen fit incidentally to throw out, while we pass to the more pleasing task of pointing to the success with which our exertions have been crowned.

The law of our general government inhibiting the importation of slaves into any part of our territories cannot but be a source of felicitation to us all. Highly gratifying as this would be in any view, it becomes still more so when we reflect that the earliest possible opportunity was taken for carrying this measure into effect as soon as the Constitutional barrier was removed, and the promptitude with which it was enacted, affords an unequivocal proof of the justice and benevolence of our government. The measure was honorable to the nation at large as well as to their Legislature. The exertion of this power became the more necessary because some of the states exhibited a disinclination to abridge what appeared a temporary advantage, although contrary to the wishes of the humane and enlightened of all classes. The toleration of a trade which daily brought more miserable victims to our shores, can no longer be a reproach, while a greater facility is afforded to the efforts of the benevolent, in rendering more light the burden which policy may suggest as unwise too suddenly to remove.

But the subject more immediately inviting our attention is the melioration of the laws of our own state, in which case, we are entitled to flatter ourselves, our exertions have not been

without influence. Under this head we may mention a statute intended as a preventive to the kidnapping of free people of colour. By an act of our Legislature passed 1st April 1808, the first offence of this kind is made punishable by imprisonment in the State-prison for seven years, and a fine in addition if deemed necessary; the penalty for a second offence is imprisonment for life. Some persons indicted under this act have absconded.

Several amendments of our statutes have been made the better to detect persons transporting slaves, and an act has also passed prohibiting their importation, or exportation, unless their owner has possessed them for ten years. It is extremely satisfactory to us to remark the promptitude with which our State Legislature has at all times adopted wholesome restrictions, when unwarrantable cupidity has been discovered in making merchandize of people of colour, and the readiness with which they have in like manner taken every measure of precaution when attempts at evading the force of law have appeared to render them necessary.

To the vigilance of our standing committee it is to be attributed that many offenders have been brought to justice under the various acts of our state here alluded to, and by the exercise of that attention which the subject requires, little doubt is entertained that offences against them will become less frequent. But upon occasions of this kind the most interesting cause for congratulation is, the great number of blacks once wrongfully held in slavery who have received the benefits of our institution, having been

emancipated and brought into the enjoyment of freedom through the exertions of the active members of our body. Reflection always rests with more satisfaction on the case of one put into the possession of a right withheld, than on one subjected to the penalty of a crime committed. The one augments the aggregate of general happiness, the other although a necessary and a salutary guard against the multiplication of crimes, gives but a gloomy picture of human frailty, and tortures the affections with the memento of man's liability to error.

Another subject for congratulation is the incorporation of this society. An act of our Legislature for this purpose was obtained at their last regular session. If we are not too sanguine in our calculations this will be a means of extending our usefulness as well as of rendering all our advantages more permanent.

As another pleasing subject for enumeration we again have to specify the school for children of colour under our care. This still holds out the appearance of advantages as great as the most sanguine had anticipated. It is at present composed of about one hundred children of both sexes. These are taught the rudiments of knowledge under the same discreet man of colour who has several times before been mentioned to you. It may justly be said that their advancement in learning, their moral demeanour, and the docility of their dispositions in conforming to a regular and appropriate discipline, are extremely grateful to those who make them the subject of attentive observation. Lancaster's mode of instruction has been introduced into

this school with considerable success, and we think proper to bear this testimony in its favour as its cheapness and simplicity, with its peculiar fitness to the instruction of a large number of scholars under one teacher, strongly recommend it to the adoption of all similar institutions.

Before we close, permit us to congratulate you upon the abolition of the Slave Trade by the Government of Great-Britain; and we cannot but express the pleasure we feel from understanding that associations are formed, composed of some of the most honourable and influential characters of that kingdom, the better to carry into effect their laws upon the subject of Slavery. May we not hope that this will prove an additional incentive to other nations to do likewise? May we not hope that humanity will keep pace with knowledge? And that in proportion as the world is enlightened, more efficient exertions will be made for advancing the liberties of mankind!

As for America, whose name awakens the best of our affections, will she not re-double her zeal and endeavours to surpass other parts of the world, in the diffusion of light, as she does in privileges? Can there be men enjoying the blessings of her government who will any longer connive at a traffic the most infamous and inhuman? If there be, it becomes peculiarly the duty of those who think as we do, to oppose and counteract them; and we indulge a well-founded expectation, that by a steady adherence to the regulations by which we have heretofore been governed, we shall contribute our mite towards abolishing forever the most detestable vice which appears to us equally repugnant to

the Laws of God and to the rights of Man ; and the very imputation of which upon our country we consider as a national disgrace.

We have chosen as Delegates to represent us in the General Convention—Thomas Eddy, Allen Sheppard, Abraham Barker, Adrian Hegerman, William Slosson, Elisha Morrell, Randolph Bunner, Henry Post, junior, Samuel Hicks, and Aaron H. Palmer.

Annexed is a list of our Officers for the present year :—

Samuel L. Mitchell, President ; Valentine Seaman, first Vice-President ; Adrian Hegerman, second Vice-President ; John Murray, junior, Treasurer ; Isaac A. Van Hook, Secretary ; Thomas Collins, Assistant Secretary ; Peter Say Munro, Thomas Addis Emmett, William Johnson and Cadwallader D. Colden, Counsellors ; Abraham Barker, Register ; William T. Slocum, Chairman of Standing Committee ; Charles Collins, Secretary of Standing Committee ; Willett Hicks, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the School ; Robert H. Bowne, Secretary of do. ; George Newbold, Chairman of Committee of Correspondence ; William Slosson, Secretary of do.

Signed on behalf of the Society,

VALENTINE SEAMAN, 1st Vice-President.

ISAAC A. VAN HOOK. Secretary.

New-York, December 24th, 1808.

From the New Jersey Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, to the ensuing American Convention, to be held in Philadelphia on the 9th day of the First Month, 1809.

Your last Address dated First Month, 1806, was received and read among us, and, with the minutes of your proceedings, was distributed in the usual proportions to our respective districts.

The recommendation respecting the procuring of Agents in the Southern States, we have duly considered; but, from our local situation, and other reasons, we deemed it unnecessary to take any measures relative thereto.

We appointed a Committee to draft and circulate petitions to Congress in favour of the abolition of the Slave Trade, but our Committee reported that Congress had been so prompt in conclusion on this subject, as to supersede the necessity of their application.

Several persons have been liberated from bondage through the agency of this Society since our last Address, but at present we cannot precisely mark their number.

The education of the People of Colour, we are very sensible, is deeply important, both as it respects their present and future happiness, and the harmony and interests of the community at large; but, we can with regret acknowledge, that very little has been done in this extensive and interesting field for labour.

Our Representatives appointed to attend the ensuing Convention, are Amos Cooper, Benja-

min Rulon, William Newbold, Richard Harts-horne, Thomas M. Potter, John Potts and Andrew Elston.

Signed on behalf of the Abolition Society of New-Jersey, by direction of a meeting thereof held at Trenton, the 28th day of the Ninth Month, 1808.

WILLIAM NEWBOLD, *V. President.*

WILLIAM ALLINSON, *Secretary.*

Officers of the Society are—

FRANKLIN DAVENPORT....PRESIDENT.

WILLIAM NEWBOLD, }VICE-PRESIDENTS.
JAMES J. WILSON, } .

WILLIAM COXE....TREASURER.

WILLIAM ALLINSON....SECRETARY.

To the American Convention, for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

THE circular address of the last Convention, together with printed copies of the minutes of its proceedings were duly received.

We have not deemed it expedient to pursue precisely the track marked out by the Convention, in establishing agencies throughout the Southern States. Experience has taught us, that without exciting an opposition too frequently the consequence of agencies formally

authorized, the essential purposes may be secured by the voluntary services of individuals, whose zeal, though tempered by considerations of individual responsibility, is generally sufficient for all attainable ends. Notwithstanding the apparent advancement of the great cause of emancipation, the application of the laws on this interesting subject, to the relief of the oppressed, becomes daily more difficult. Prudence has become necessary to our security, and persuasion to our success. While we thus candidly acknowledge the necessity of circumspection, we deprecate an inference, that our conduct is in any degree influenced by a direction, of principles. On the contrary we continue to commiserate the sufferings of this oppressed race, and abhor the selfish policy, which sanctions the sacrifice of justice and humanity at the shrine of avarice. Hitherto the approving voice of the community and the liberal interpretation of the law, have smoothed the path of duty and promoted a satisfactory issue to our humane exertions. At present however the sentiments of our fellow citizens and the decisions of our courts are less auspicious. This change of opinion, so injurious to the cause we have espoused, is to be attributed to the success rather than to the misconduct of the society. Our early and meritorious exertions awakened the attention and secured the approbation of a large portion of our fellow citizens. The oppressor shrunk from a contest against triumphant justice and general indignation, while the oppressed became emboldened by success and strengthened by the increasing current of opinion in favour of emancipation. The report of our trans-

actions spread far beyond the limits prescribed for our exertions by the laws of Pennsylvania. Hundreds of our fellow-beings, in the neighbouring states, who bore with impatience the galling yoke of slavery, availed themselves of every opportunity, which the varying circumstances of life might furnish, to claim the protection of our statutes. Even those who from the lenity or justice of their masters obtained freedom, resorted generally to this city, as an assylum where a repetition of the wrongs they had endured, was not to be feared. Freed from the shackles, but not from the vices of slavery those victims of inhumanity thronged our streets in search of pleasure or employment. Some indeed embraced the opportunities which every where presented, of obtaining an honest support. But too many served only to swell the list of our criminals and augment the catalogue of our paupers. As the burthen increased, the reputation of our institution diminished. Hence it has happened, that those evils which are the inevitable consequences of slavery, and the inconveniences resulting from that liberal and humane policy which but lately was the boast of Pennsylvania, are charged to the sole account of that portion of the community, who by great sacrifices of time and property, gave efficacy to the system.

Under a pressure of circumstances so discouraging, we think it expedient to devote our attention particularly to the moral and intellectual improvement of this degraded class of our fellow beings. The funds under the control of our society, though increasing, are yet too small to effect much in the literary department.

This deficiency however is the less to be regretted, inasmuch as several large and well regulated schools are constantly maintained under the care of various religious denominations in this city. In common with ourselves, this people possess the means of religious instruction. We therefore confidently hope, that as time shall remove from this stage of existence, those unfortunate beings who were originally slaves, the vices of slavery will proportionably diminish; and that their free born offspring, removed from the contagion of bad example, will gradually attain that degree of usefulness and respectability which ordinarily falls to the portion of man.

We have appointed, to represent this society in the ensuing Convention, Timothy Paxson, Roberts Vaux, Thomas P. Cope, Joseph R. Jenks, Stephen Pike, Benjamin Williams, & Joseph Parker.

By order of the Pennsylvania Society, for promoting the abolition of slavery.

TIMOTHY PAXSON *Chairman.*

ATTEST
BENJAMIN WILLIAMS *Secretary.*

Philadelphia, 1st mo. 2d 1808.

The officers of the Society for the current year 1809—are

PRESIDENT.....DOCTOR BENJAMIN RUSH.

VICE-PRES... { ROBERT PATTERSON,
 { THOMAS PARKER.

TREASURER.....JOHN EVANS.

SECRETARIES { BENJAMIN WILLIAMS.
 { NATHAN SMITH.

COUNSELLORS.

| | |
|--|---|
| William Lewis, William Rawle, John Hallowell, Walter Franklin, James Milnor, Joseph Hopkinson, Joseph Hemphill, Daniel Smith, | George Fisher, Richard Rush, George Vaux, Jacob S. Waln, jun. Walker Reed, William Delaney, Jos. R. Hopkins, esqrs. |
|--|---|

ELECTING COMMITTEE.

| | |
|---|--|
| Thomas Harrison, Joseph Moore, Joseph Price, Isaac Pearson, Thomas Rogers, Samuel Smith, | William Master, Joseph D. Martin, Thomas Phipps, Edmund Kinsey Charles Townsend, Abraham Hilyard. |
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To the American Convention, for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

YOUR last circular address was received by us, and read with interest, and pleasure.

We regret most sincerely, the difficulty we labour under, in establishing correspondents, and agents in the southern States, on whose fidelity, and integrity we can firmly rely. That subject, however, has not been entirely neglected by this society.

We learn with equal regret, that the most artful modes of kidnapping, and other clandestine trafic in the human species ; calculated to wound every generous feeling, are still extended from the Eastern to the Southern States,

to a degree much to be lamented by the friends of humanity. We earnestly wish we could contribute, if it were but a small mite, in bringing such abettors to public justice.

We feel much satisfaction in the renewal of your recommendation, respecting the education of the people of colour. We feel with you, that liberty, may become an evil, without a previous qualification for its enjoyment, and a preparation on the part of the subject, of becoming useful to himself, to his family and his country.

We consider it, a jubilee, to the African world, that the time has not only arrived, but that Congress has had wisdom, and humanity, sufficient to prohibit the farther importation of slaves, into our land.

We deem the alteration from an annual, to a trienial meeting, as wise and salutary ; and we trust with you, that no diminution of our zeal will be experienced by the change. No ! we hope our hearts will still be enlarged, and our hands still strengthened in the work, till the rulers, and the ruled, shall practise what the sacred charter of our liberty declares ; that " we hold those truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal : that they are endowed with certain unalienable rights : that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Agreeably to our former custom, we appointed a committee from our society, to hold a conference with the people of colour in this place. They have reported a compliance with their appointment, and that they were well pleased with

the result. Extracts from your different addresses, were read and observations made, illuminating their various topics. The necessity of faithfully observing the duties they inculcated, were seriously enjoined.

One slave has been freed since our last report, by the aid of the society; and a pecuniary punishment inflicted on the purchaser. Several manumissions have also been effected, either directly, or indirectly, from the same source.

The suits mentioned in our last, have been discontinued, for want of legal evidence.

On the subject of education, we wish we were authorised to give a more favourable account. Personal, and pecuniary aid have been extended, and, although our labors of love have not proved entirely in vain; we have still to lament that their benificial effects, have not been more generally experienced. We are sorry to find so little disposition on their part to aid us in our friendly endeavours to promote their happiness.

It is with much pleasure, we learn that the friends of humanity in the lower county of our state, are forming themselves into a society for protecting the suffering cause of liberty, among the African race. We hope they will never be weary in thus well doing; and that in due season they will reap their full reward.

We have appointed Cyrus Newlin, Samuel Nicols, Joseph Bringhurst, jun. Isaac H. Starr, William Poole, and William Pryce, to represent us in the next American Convention.

The following are the present Officers of our Society.

PRESIDENT....WILLIAM PRYCE,
 VICE-PRES.... DANIEL LOWBER.
 TREASURER....WILLIAM SEAL.
 SECRETARY....JOHN REYNOLDS.
 RECORDER....JOHN JONES.

ACTING COMMITTEE.

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Edward Gilpin, | John Jones, & |
| Eli Mendenhall, | Joseph Bringhurst, jun. |

Signed by order of the Abolition society of Delaware.

WILLIAM PRYCE, *President.*

ATTEST,
 JOHN' REYNOLDS, *Secretary.*

Wilmington, January the 4th 1809.

ON motion, resolved, that Abraham Barker, William Newbold, Thomas P. Cope, & Isaac H. Starr be a committee of arrangement to whom shall be referred the communications from the several Abolition Societies and that they be instructed to enquire into and report, such other objects for the consideration of the Convention, as they may deem proper.

The Treasurer made report, of the state of his account, which was referred to Joseph Bringhurst, and Amos Cooper, to examine and report thereon.

The Minutes of the Acting Committee, were read, and approved.

Whereupon resolved, that the letter from the honourable William Wilberforce, esq. on record therein, be printed with the Minutes of the proceedings of this Convention, being as follows;

Lyme, August 28th, 1806.

SIR,

I AM honoured with your letter of the 2d of June last, inclosing a resolution of a meeting of the 11th American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c. and I beg you will do me the favour to convey to the Convention, the assurance of my high respect and cordial acknowledgements. It is particularly gratifying to find that the great cause of the Abolition of the Slave trade interests men of justice and liberality in all countries, and I trust it will please God, ere long, to crown with success our efforts in behalf of our African Brethren.

From, sir, your faithful servant.

W. WILBERFORCE.

TIMOTHY PAXSON,
Chairman of the Acting Committee. }

On motion resolved, that B. Williams be directed to inform John Bacon of his election to the office of Secretary and request his attendance at the ensuing Meeting.

Resolved, that when the Convention do adjourn they adjourn until to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.
Adjourned.

Philadelphia, January 11, 1809.

Convention met pursuant to adjournment:

P R E S E N T :

TIMOTHY PAXSON, PRESIDENT.

Abraham Barker,
Samuel Hicks,
Aaron H. Palmer,
Amos Cooper,
William Newbold,
Roberts Vaux,
Thomas P. Cope,
Stephen Pike,

Joseph Parker,
Benjamin Williams,
Cyrus Newlin,
Joseph Bringhurst, jr.
Isaac H. Starr,
William Poole, and
William Pryce.

The Committee of Arrangement made the following report, which was ordered to lie on the table:

The Committee to whom was referred the Addresses from the several Abolition Societies,

REPORT, That on a careful perusal of the documents referred to them, they do not perceive that they contain any new matter requiring the particular consideration of the Convention.

The total inhibition of the Slave Trade, by an act of the general government, passed since the meeting of the last Convention, while it must ever be the theme of peculiar felicitation to the friends of humanity, demanding also the warmest acknowledgment of our gratitude to the Supreme Disposer of events, may with propriety be considered as the accomplishment of one of the great objects of our association. But when

we reflect, that nearly a million of human beings remain yet in a state of abject bondage in these United States ; and that, of those who have been liberated, a large number require the fostering care of the advocates of freedom, we must be persuaded that there is still a wide field open for the serious and diligent exercise of our best faculties. The Committee therefore propose....

1st, That a Committee be appointed to draft a circular address to the several Abolition Societies.

2d, That it be impressively recommended to them to pursue the most efficient measures in their power to prevent the inhuman practice of kidnapping.

3d, That it be also recommended to them to be particularly attentive to the religious, moral and literary improvement of the blacks, and other people of colour.

4th, That the several Societies be requested to encourage the frequent publication of extracts from celebrated works, adverse to the holding of our fellow men in bondage ; and such original essays as may tend to prepare the minds of both master and slave for that great desideratum, *the gradual and final extinction of slavery in the United States.*

The Committee on the Treasurer's accounts, made report, which was ordered to lie on the table.

On motion, resolved, that the report of the

Committee of Arrangement be again read, and considered by sections.

The first section being under consideration, was approved and referred to Aaron H. Palmer, William Newbold, Thomas P. Cope and Joseph Bringhurst, jun. to report thereon.

Resolved, that the other several sections of the said report be referred to the Committee to whom was referred the first section, and who are also authorized to consider and report such other objects as they may deem proper.

On motion. The report of the Committee on the Treasurer's accounts was taken up and approved, by which it appears that the Convention are possessed of five shares in the Philadelphia Bank Stock, which at par are worth 500 dollars, and the balance in the Treasurer's hands is \$89 dollars 78 cents.

The Convention proceeded to the nomination of the Acting Committee for the ensuing three years, and the following persons were appointed for that service: New-York, Samuel Hicks; New-Jersey, William Newbold; Pennsylvania, Timothy Paxson, Thomas P. Cope, Benjamin Williams and Roberts Vaux; Delaware, Isaac H. Starr.

On motion resolved, that when the Convention do adjourn they adjourn to meet this evening at six o'clock. Adjourned.

SIX o'CLOCK, P. M.

The following persons attended pursuant to adjournment:

TIMOTHY PAXSON, PRESIDENT.

Abraham Barker,
Samuel Hicks,
Aaron H. Palmer,
Amos Cooper,
William Newbold,
Roberts Vaux,
Thomas P. Cope,
Stephen Pike,

Benjamin Williams,
Joseph Parker,
Cyrus Newlin,
Joseph Bringhurst, jr.
Isaac H. Starr,
William Poole, and
William Pryce.

The Committee to whom was referred the report of the Committee of Arrangement, reported an essay of an address to the several Abolition Societies in the United States, which was carefully considered by paragraphs, and with some alterations, adopted as follows :....

To

WE the American Convention of Delegates for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, feeling the importance of the business which you have committed to our deliberation, deem it our duty to address you, and to communicate some of the subjects which have claimed our particular attention.

We learn that in some parts of the United States, there are yet men so lost to all honourable feelings, so deeply depraved as to violate those laws of their country which were intended

to protect the rights of free persons of colour. Those who have any knowledge of the heart of man, his selfish attachments, and the firm grasp with which he seizes and holds all that he calls his own, cannot be surprized at the reluctance which individuals evince, in resigning their claims to those people of colour who are legally their slaves : but at this period when the rights of man are so well understood, in a country where the highest degree of civil liberty is enjoyed by the white citizens, it appears astonishing that the kidnapper should be permitted to carry on his depredations ; that his audacious encroachments on the rights and happiness of the suffering people of colour should, for a moment, be tolerated. We hope our feelings on this subject, will not be considered as the offspring of misguided zeal. Every one in whose heart the pulse of benevolence beats, whose sentiments are not degraded beneath the dignity of man *must feel* on this occasion ; he must be sensible of the deep crime which the kidnapper commits against the laws of his country, and the violent nature of his trespass on the dearest rights of humanity. The man of colour whom our country has declared *free* ; around whose liberty the law has thrown its protecting arms, in defiance of the voice of that country and that law, is torn from his family by the midnight robber, and transported to the mournful regions of perpetual slavery, while his wife and his little ones are left to struggle alone, in poverty, for the bread of mere existence. This is a melancholy but a faithful picture of the miseries occasioned by the detestable kidnapper. Let us exert our best faculties for the purpose

of eradicating such evils. Those societies who form the line of demarcation between the states in which slavery has been partially or totally abolished, and those in which it is unconditionally maintained, are particularly and earnestly requested to use all their vigilance for the detection of kidnappers and the suppression of those crimes. We do not mean to say that any deficiency, in proper zeal, has been manifested by those societies, we rather wish to speak the language of encouragement.

We observe with satisfaction the continued care, of several societies, in the great task of education. We hope there is not a single member of any one of our societies who does not perceive the importance of it. To make men happy in themselves and useful to society it is not necessary that they be taught the abstruse sciences, but it is indispensably requisite that they be qualified to form a correct estimate of those powers, and to exercise those faculties which the Great Creator of man has been pleased to intrust to their care. The Abolition Societies may be regarded as the paternal protectors and friends of the people of colour. They have undertaken that task and it is their duty to persevere in their labours, to hold out to the end in their good work. Although liberty be a blessing, when we obtain the freedom of the slave our work is not completed. It then becomes our peculiar charge to endeavour to teach the enfranchized man how to value, and how to employ the priviledges which have fallen to his lot. This noble task is rapidly progressing in some societies, and we seriously and affectionately

invite others to imitate their benevolent efforts. Lancaster's plan of instruction seems admirably adapted for the communication of the rudiments of literature, we hope there are, in all our societies, some individuals whose condition of life will allow them leisure, and whose virtue will animate them to persevering efforts in the blessed task of instructing the forlorn, and in some places, we may say almost friendless people of colour. Let them be taught to read and they will be introduced to a knowledge of the scriptures, those sacred repositories of moral and divine truth; let them be taught the elementary branches of arithmetic which will prepare them for the common concerns of life.

We rejoice with you that our national Government has had the wisdom and humanity, to embrace the first constitutional opportunity afforded, to pass a law which entirely prohibits our citizens from foreign traffic in human flesh. We hope our hearts are not without sentiments of sincere gratitude to the great disposer of events for that signal blessing. But we have to sympathize with nearly a million of human beings who are yet subject to the bonds of slavery within the United States, we have yet to mourn over this dishonour of our country. The progress of truth, or correct opinion of right has accomplished great ends, but much remains to be done. Domestic slavery is a national crime; a crime which is calculated to excite in the man of upright sentiments, serious and awful apprehensions of the final consequences of its continuance. It is our duty to employ the pen and the press for the dissemina-

tion of such arguments as shall convince our countrymen of the injustice and impolicy of such slavery. The man whose mind is clouded by prejudice, while his heart is hardened by selfish considerations, must have truth frequently repeated, and presented under various aspects, before his errors can be corrected, his prejudices subdued, and the noble feelings of philanthropy excited in his breast. This is a constant, an arduous, but not a hopeless duty. We therefore recommend the frequent publication of extracts from celebrated works, or original essays, tending to establish the justice and policy of gradual and general emancipation.

One society has informed us that a committee of its members held a satisfactory conference with the blacks and other people of colour. We think such conferences, under the direction of discreet men, may have a beneficial influence on the minds of the blacks, we again recommend the subject to your attention. In such meetings the advice of former Conventions may be renewed, and, we think, the necessity of legal marriages, honesty in their dealings, and the importance of religious instruction should be impressively urged upon them.

We learn that Thomas Clarkson's history of the abolition of the slave trade, which has been reprinted in Philadelphia, is now published for the emolument of its author. When we consider the value of this work to the cause of emancipation, the indefatigable zeal of that powerful and benevolent advocate for the rights of the Africans, and his great expence in the performance of his labours, we think ourselves bound

in duty, to contribute our aid for the general circulation of his interesting history. We therefore earnestly recommend that work to your patronage, and we hope you will cheerfully employ such means, as you may think effectual for promoting its sale.

Copies of the minutes of our proceedings will be forwarded to you by our Acting Committee.

Resolved unanimously, that the Acting Committee be requested to convey to Thomas Clarkson of Great Britain the sincere and ardent esteem which this Convention entertain for his character, their warm approbation of the many valuable works, on the subject of emancipation which have proceeded from his pen, and their cordial thanks for his persevering, philanthropic and efficient labours in the accomplishment of the Abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire.

Resolved that when the Convention do adjourn, they adjourn until ten o'clock to morrow morning.
Adjourned.

January 12th, 1809.

Convention met pursuant to Adjournment.

TIMOTHY PAXSON, PRESIDENT.

Abraham Barker,
Samuel Hicks,
Aaron H. Palmer,
Amos Cooper,
Roberts Vaux,
Thomas P. Cope,
Stephen Pike,

|| Benjamin Williams,
Joseph Parker,
Cyrus Newlin,
Joseph Bringhurst, jr.
Isaac H. Starr,
William Poole, and
William Pryce.

The Convention were informed that, in consequence of the indisposition of a near relative, in the family of William Newbold, his further attendance would be prevented.

Resolved, that the Acting Committee be authorized and directed to present in the name of this Convention, to the President and Vice-President of the United States, and the Secretary of State, each, one copy of Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade; and also, that they have bound into one volume the minutes of the preceding several American Conventions; which, together with a sett of Clarkson's History, they be directed to transmit to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, accompanied with a request that he will be pleased to cause them to be deposited in the Library belonging to the Congress of the United States.

A member of the Committee heretofore appointed to superintend the compilation of a history of Slavery in the United States, made the following communication :

That the gentleman employed to compose that history, had made considerable progress in the work, when, as he states, he was interrupted by imperious engagements, which will prevent him for some months from proceeding on the subject; but that he intended hereafter to resume it, and hoped to complete it at no very distant period.

Whereupon resolved, that the future care of this subject be referred to the Acting Committee.

Resolved, that the Acting Committee be requested to present the thanks of this Convention to the President of the Select Council of the city of Philadelphia, for the use of their Chamber during this session.

Resolved, that the Acting Committee cause five hundred copies of the minutes of this Convention, and as many of the Circular Addresses as they may deem proper, to be printed and transmitted in their usual proportions to the different Abolition Societies.

Resolved, That the same Committee be directed to give three months previous notice of the meeting of the next Convention to the several Abolition Societies; and that they enjoin it on them to be careful in the appointment of such Delegates, as will be likely to attend the same.

Adjourned sine die.

Published by order of the Convention.

JOHN BACON, Secretary.

MINUTES
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE THIRTEENTH
AMERICAN CONVENTION
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY,
AND
IMPROVING THE CONDITION
OF THE
AFRICAN RACE:

Assembled

AT PHILADELPHIA,

On the Thirteenth day of January, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Twelve, and continued
by adjournments until the Sixteenth day of the same month, inclusive.

HAMILTON-VILLE:
PRINTED BY JOHN BOUVIER.

1812.

MINUTES
OF
THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE THIRTEENTH
AMERICAN CONVENTION
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, &c.

SELECT COUNCIL CHAMBER.

Philadelphia, January 13th, 1812.

THIS being the day appointed by the Constitution for the meeting of the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of slavery, several gentlemen assembled at 10 o'clock A. M. *Thomas P. Cope* was appointed Chairman, and *Benjamin Williams* Secretary, pro tempore.

From the credentials produced, it appeared that Samuel Hicks, Thomas Collins, Willet Robbins, Jereniah Thompson, Gilbert Shotwell, Mordecai Lewis, Thomas Tucker, Willet Seaman, Sylvanus F. Jenkins, and Joshua Underhill, had been appointed to represent the Manumission Society of New-York, and Timothy Paxson, Thomas P. Cope, John Sergeant, Samuel Smith, Roberts Vaux, Joseph M. Paul, and Benjamin Williams, the Abolition Society of Pennsylvania, in this Convention.

Of whom were present,

Thomas Collins,
Jeremiah Thompson, }
Willet Seaman, } *New-York.*

Thomas P. Cope,
John Sergeant,
Samuel Smith,
Joseph M. Paul,
Benjamin Williams,
Roberts Vaux, } *of Pennsylvania.*

Not being a quorum, on motion Resolved, That the chairman endeavour to ascertain whether the New-Jersey and Delaware Societies have appointed Delegates to this Convention, and report the result of his inquiries to the next meeting.

Resolved, that when this meeting adjourns, it will adjourn until to-morrow afternoon at 3 o'clock.

Adjourned.

JANUARY 14th, 3 o'clock P. M.

Pursuant to adjournment the undesignated gentlemen assembled.

THOMAS P. COPE, Chairman.

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Thomas Collins, | Roberts Vaux, |
| Jeremiah Thompson, | Joseph M. Paul, |
| Willet Seaman, | Samuel Smith, |
| John Sergeant, | Benjamin Williams. |

The Chairman reported that he had been informed that the Delaware Society had not appointed a delegation to the present Convention; and that being unable to ascertain whether the New-Jersey Society had done so, he had written for information to a member of that Society in Trenton, from whom he had received no answer.

By a communication now produced, it appeared that Samuel Coleman and Joshua Newbold had been

appointed Representatives of the Abolition Society of New-Jersey; both of whom being present, and a quorum consequently formed, the Convention proceeded to the choice of officers. Roberts Vaux and the Secretary were appointed Tellers, from whose report, it appeared that the undernamed members were duly chosen, viz.

JOHN SERGEANT, Esq. PRESIDENT.

THOMAS P. COPE, TREASURER.

BENJAMIN WILLIAMS, SECRETARY.

Communications from the Abolition Societies of New-York, New-Jersey, and Pennsylvania, were read, as follows, viz.

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African Race, to be assembled at Philadelphia, on the thirteenth day of the present month.

THE "New-York Society for promoting the manumission of slaves, and protecting such of them, as have been, or may be liberated," acknowledge, with satisfaction, the due receipt of your Circular Address to the several Abolition Societies in the United States.

Believing in the justice and humanity of the cause, in which we have mutually embarked; and, that unity of sentiment and concert of action, are necessary to the attainment of our noble object, this society, readily, communicates the knowledge of such facts, as are deemed important, and, freely, discloses its views, prospects, and opinions.

While we regret, that habitual prejudice, fostered by the most culpable ignorance; and selfish policy, which sanctions the sacrifice of justice and humanity at the shrine of cupidity and avarice, labour to oppose the progress of the good work, in which we are engaged; we rejoice to find the public sentiment gradually becoming more in unison with the dic-

tates of nature, and the principles of reason; and the public feeling more consonant with genuine philanthropy, and universal benevolence.

It has afforded us satisfaction to observe, that, those minds, which have become enlightened by education, and been influenced by the benign genius of morality, and the mild spirit of religion, have, generally, yielded a ready assent to the doctrines of freedom, which we have maintained; while the ignorant and immoral, have withstood the attempts made to eradicate the erroneous opinions, which they cherish and support. Hence, it is deemed important, that the theories of slave-holders be examined, and their fallacy exposed; that the principles, or first rudiments of our social being be explored; that our individual relations, and civil ties, be brought into view; and, that the duties, respectively resulting from them, be frequently enforced in publications, calculated to awaken the best feelings of the human breast, to drive the practical sophist from his weak retreat, to deter the bold by an exposition of the heavy penalties of such laws as may be in force, and to excite to action, those sparks of humanity and benevolence, which lie covered under the rubbish of avarice and ignorance.

Having restored liberty to the captive, and seen him exult in the enjoyment of the high, the native prerogative of man, we deem our work as but half accomplished: For what would avail the possession of freedom, to which the depravity of man, or his ignorance of providing for his support, would give but a momentary date, when he would sink to a state of servitude, but a little more tolerable than the condition from which he had been raised, unless he was furnished with the means, not only to support himself, but to enjoy the dear felicities of domestic life; to sustain the various duties incident to civil society,

to partake of its various privileges, to improve his understanding, and to amend his heart.

With these impressions, this society, early, commenced the work of imparting the rudiments of knowledge to a number of youths, descended from people of colour. From small beginnings, our school has, gradually, progressed in point of numbers and improvement, until the present time, when, we are happy to say, its state is highly respectable.

Under the immediate direction of a teacher, who embarks with an ardour and a zeal, which evince, at once, the benevolence of his heart, and his attachment to his charge, our school, we are persuaded, would not suffer by a comparison with the most flourishing our city affords.

The Lancastrian system of education, which was, some years since, adopted, has been continued, and its superior excellencies have been evinced by the improvement which the scholars have made. The reading of the Holy Scriptures, by the higher classes, together with other beneficial regulations, appears to have had, and it is hoped, will continue to have, a salutary effect.

The school, at present, consists of one hundred and thirty scholars, of both sexes.

Three other schools, for the instruction of people of colour, are opened in this city; the teachers of which receive a compensation from those who send their children. A society, among the free people of colour in this city, is forming for the purpose of raising a fund, with the interest of which, to sustain the charge of a free school for orphan children.

Since the last meeting of the convention, the Legislature of this state has passed an act relative to the people of the African race; by which, no person held as a slave can be introduced or brought into this state, and continue to be held as a slave, after the first day

of May, 1810, on any pretence whatever, by any person coming permanently to reside within the same ; and a residence of nine months is declared to be a permanent residence.

By the same act, a pernicious and shameful evasion of our laws, by freeing the slave while residing out of the state, and causing him to execute an indenture of service to a person within it, has been prevented; by declaring such instrument void, and the slave free.

By another section of this act, the Legislature have wisely had in view the moral as well as mental improvement of those persons born of slaves, who are subject to servitude until the age of twenty-five and twenty-eight years, by requiring the master to cause such servant to be taught reading, so as to be able to read the Holy Scriptures, previous to such servants arriving at the age of twenty-one years. And in case of neglect, granting a release from servitude at that age.

Considering the amelioration of the state of slavery as desireable, and the extinction of it among us, as highly important, we cannot but congratulate every friend to the cause of humanity on the passing of this act.

To the next meeting of our state Legislature, we are going to present an address for the total abolition of slavery throughout this state ; and, in contemplating the widely diffused happiness which the success of such an application will produce ; the advancement of so many fellow beings to the enjoyment of numerous civil and religious privileges ; the mass of human wretchedness, cruelty, and woe, which will be suppressed or removed ; and the progress of free, though sable unborn thousands, in all the virtues, that adorn the human character, our bosoms swell with transports of joy.

The Standing Committee, on whom more immediately devolve the active duties of liberating the slave, and ameliorating the condition of the oppressed, have now in charge forty-five cases; and, since our last address, have succeeded in gladdening the hearts of one hundred and sixty-five fellow beings with the blessing of freedom.

The diligence of this society has been called into exercise by a continuance of the practice of arresting persons of colour, as fugitives from labour, under pretence of restoring them to their alledged owners; when their real object was to gratify their cupidity by consigning them to slavery. It is hoped, not many attempts have either escaped our notice, or been successful.

Masters have, in several instances, in different parts of the state, procured the conviction of their slaves for some trifling petty larceny, with a view of inducing the court to permit an exportation for sale. On our Bench, humanity has, generally, presided with justice, and the vile aims of avarice have been, usually, defeated.

We have reason to fear, the diabolical practice of kidnapping is still continued; but the vigilance of several of our members has limitted the evil; and this outrageous, clandestine conduct seems to have given place to open claims under the fugitive act.

We would submit to your consideration the revision of the laws of the United States, and an application to the National Legislature; not only to amend such as seem defective, but to supervise the whole subject, and to enact one general law, whose scope and provisions shall be as comprehensive as the evil, and whose features shall have more uniformity. Particularly, we would suggest the propriety of having the penalties and forfeitures enure to the sole benefit of the person prosecuting to effect, or, at least,

one half thereof. Thus, on the one hand, stimulating individuals to endure the unjust odium of becoming public prosecutors; and, on the other, preventing the law from sleeping in the hands of district attorneys, who may not be roused in some instances, but by the commands of other officers, ignorant of the facts and testimony, and who, usually, do not see fit to interfere.

While we would guard, with circumspection, against any conduct, which should create asperities, and arouse opposition; still we would recommend the faithful enforcement of the laws, against stubborn or notorious offenders; and, especially, against any attempts to carry on the African slave trade. Every grade, in this nefarious traffic, which severs the dearest ties of domestic life, fills the bosom of affection with hopeless anguish, tears the unprotected victim from his country and his home, and plunges him into wretchedness bordering on despair, ought to awaken in us, an attention that cannot sleep, a diligence that cannot tire, an ardour that will not abate, a perseverance that will not slacken, and courage that cannot fear.

Firmly, then, fellow labourers, let us press forward, nor let our exertion cease, until the benevolent objects, we have in view be fully attained.

We have chosen, as delegates, to represent us in the next American Convention,

Samuel Hicks, Thomas Collins, Willet Robbins, Jeremiah Thompson, Gilbert Shotwell, Mordecai Lewis, Thomas Tucker, Willet Seamen, Sylvanus F. Jenkins, and Joshua Underhill.

Annexed, is a list of the officers of this society, at the present time :

PETER JAY MUNRO, PRESIDENT.

VALENTINE SEAMAN, 1st VICE-PRESIDENT.

GEORGE NEWBOLD, 2d VICE-PRESIDENT.

JOHN MURRAY, JUN. TREASURER.

ISAAC A. VAN HOOK, SECRETARY.

JEREMIAH THOMPSON, ASSISTANT SECRETARY.

COUNSELLORS.

Cadwallader D. Colden, William Johnson, Nathan Sanford, John Wadsworth, Peter A. Jay, Thomas Addis Emmett, Joseph Warren Brackett, William Slosson.

Benjamin S. Collins, Register.

Willet Robbins, Chairman, and John J. Cromwell, Secretary, of Standing Committee.

George Newbold, Chairman, and Thomas Collins, Secretary, of the Board of Trustees of the School.

Isaac Wright, Chairman, and Sylvanus F. Jenkins, Secretary, of the Committee of Ways and Means.

George Newbold, Chairman, and William Slosson, Secretary, of the Committee of Correspondence.

Signed on behalf of the Society.

PETER JAY MUNRO, PRESIDENT.

ISAAC A. VAN HOOK, SECRETARY.

New-York, 3d January, 1812.

To the American Convention of Delegates from the several State Societies, for the promotion of the Abolition of Slavery.

IT is with some degree of sorrow and of shame, we acknowledge, that the zeal of the members of the different Abolition Societies of this state has so far abated, that no meeting was held at the stated time for the appointment of delegates to your body; and the notice from your secretary of the time and place of your meeting, having been delayed on its way, was received too late to allow us to convene a special meeting of delegates from the several district Societies for that purpose.

Taking these circumstances into view, and governed not less by the opinions of other zealous friends of our common cause than by our own, that the necessity of the case imposed it upon us, as the only means of preventing our state from being wholly unrepresented in your body, the Trenton Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, at a meeting convened by public notice, have appointed Samuel Coleman and Joshua Newbold our delegates, to afford you any information which may be desirable, and to receive any instructions which may be useful.

While we adduce the abatement of zeal among the members in this state as the reason why delegates *were not* appointed in the usual way, at the stated time, and *have been* elected by us; we ought in justice to mention that there is a strong hope our Society will be re-animated, and will renew its exertions in the cause of humanity.

Cases have occurred of the removal of slaves from this state for the undoubted purpose of selling them in our southern states and territories; and the penalty at present provided for such offences (fifty dollars fine!) being entirely inadequate to prevent the practice, as well as insufficient to punish the offenders, a

resolution has been submitted to the legislature, by a member of this society, to have the law amended in this respect. The society will aid the enactment of the substance of this resolution into a law all in their power; and will use all practicable vigilance in suppressing this cruel and unlawful traffic, and in bringing those who carry it on to condign punishment.

Several attempts have been made by the Society to obtain a revision of our act concerning slaves, but without success. It may, however, be truly observed, that, generally speaking, the slaves in this state are clothed and fed decently and comfortably, allowed necessary recreation and repose, permitted to attend places of worship, and treated with much more humanity and lenity than they were a few years ago.

And although we are constrained to acknowledge that too many of the free people of colour do not exhibit that industry, economy and temperance that was expected by many and wished by all; yet we are not without numerous instances where they conduct in a manner which many of our white brethren might imitate with advantage; and which strengthens our confidence that the whole race will one day rise to a place in society which they are now deemed incompetent and unworthy to occupy.

SAM. PAXON,
JAMES J. WILSON, } COMMITTEE.

Trenton, January 6, 1812.

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

YOUR last circular address and the accompanying printed copies of the minutes of your proceeding were duly received.

With you we freely express our astonishment that the detestable practice of kidnapping should be tolerated for a moment in a country like ours. Must the annals of our nation still be tarnished by the melancholy truth that at this period a wretch should be found amongst us capable of committing this dreadful outrage in hardy violation of so many forbidding civil and sacred injunctions. For a crime so truly hateful in its nature we trust we have the indignant feelings which become us; the subject should never be forgotten; it has been recalled to our recollection by your address, and we are now preparing a memorial to the legislature of our state, soliciting the enactment of a law more effectually to punish and prevent the diabolical practice.

That it would be only an act of justice to improve the mental faculties of the brother whom our exertions have restored to freedom is a truth which will scarcely be doubted, for liberty, great as is the blessing, may under some circumstances be an evil to its possessor. But the experience of every year furnishes us abundant proof that if we wish the freedman to be a useful member of and not a burden on civil society, it is absolutely necessary that we give him a moderate share of moral and intellectual instruction.

The cruel arm of the taskmaster has debased his faculties; 'tis the generous hand of education that must humanize and improve them. Fully impressed with these sentiments, which are consonant to your own, we are zealously maturing a plan of education, which we believe will ere long enable us to be extensively useful.

Your advice, frequently to publish extracts from celebrated works, or original essays, tending to establish the justice and policy of gradual and general emancipation, has not passed unnoticed; but while

we admit the correctness of the reasoning which proves the general propriety of the practice we content ourselves with observing, that we have not discovered any thing in the circumstances of the state we reside in, which makes it particularly necessary to act upon the recommendation.

With this address we transmit you a letter from the African institution in London, and several accompanying documents, believing the importance of their contents will entitle them to your attention.

We have appointed to represent us in the ensuing Convention, Timothy Paxson, Roberts Vaux, Thomas P. Cope, John Sergeant, Joseph M. Paul, Samuel Smith, and Benjamin Williams.

Signed on behalf of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

THOMAS PARKER, VICE-PRESIDENT.

Attest, BENJAMIN WILLIAMS, SECRETARY.

The Officers of the Society are,

President.....BENJAMIN RUSH, M. D.

Vice-Pres..... { ROBERT PATTERSON,
THOMAS PARKER.

Treasurer.....THOMAS PHIPPS.

Secretaries..... { BENJAMIN WILLIAMS,
NATHAN SMITH.

COUNSELLORS.

Wm. Lewis, Wm. Rawle, Jno. Hallowell, Jas. Milnor, Jos. Hopkinson, Richard Rush, Wm. L. Delany, Philadelphia.

Abraham Chapman, Bucks.

George Fisher, Dauphin.

ELECTING COMMITTEE.

Thomas Harrison, Joseph Moore, Isaac Pearson, Joseph Price, Thomas Rogers, Thomas Phipps, Samuel Smith, Edmund Kinsey, Abraham Hilyard, Charles Townsend, William Master, William Brown.

The communication from Pennsylvania was accompanied by sundry Letters, Books, and papers, viz.

A letter dated London, 17th Septem^r, 1811, signed Zachary Macauley, Secretary to the Board of Directors of the African Institution of London.

Extracts from the Records of the British Court of Admiralty.

Four Reports of the Directors of the African Institution of London, bound in one volume.

The fifth Report of do.

A Review of the fifth Report.

Sundry Acts of Parliament, and the following letter from the Kentucky Abolition Society.

To the President and Members of the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery.

Respected Friends,

The Kentucky Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c. have received, with great satisfaction, your communication of the 30th October, 1809; we rejoice to hear that we have your prayers and well wishes, for our prosperity in so laudable an undertaking; and receive with kindness your information, on the mode of your proceedings; it goes much to strengthen our hands, to hear that you feel disposed to correspond with us, in your General Convention to meet on the second Monday in January, 1812.

As it will not be in our power to correspond with you by Messenger, we request it as a favour to in-

form them, that there is such an institution in this state: though but an infant, and but small; yet when we contemplate, that we have (as it were) a mother to look up to for instruction and assistance; it gives us great consolation, to persevere in that, which we believe to be our duty, as well wishers to our beloved country, and having an affectionate feeling for our fellow creature Man.— We have nothing more to relate to you, only that you be fervent at the Throne of Grace, that GOD will please to direct us in all our proceedings so that we may not injure the cause we have espoused; but that we may be instruments in his hands, though but small and contemptible in the esteem of a number of our fellow citizens, of doing much good. Finally farewell—Pray for us.

Signed by order of the Meeting of the Kentucky Abolition Society.

CARTER TARRANT, PRESIDENT.

Attest, JNO. THOMAS, SECRETARY.

The letters from Z. Macaulay and the Kentucky Abolition Society were read.

Resolved, That Willet Scaman, Joshua Newbold, and John Sergeant, be a Committee of Arrangement, and that the Addresses and accompanying Documents be referred to them for examination and report, and that they be also instructed to report to the Convention any other business which they may think useful and proper for its consideration.

The Minutes of the Acting Committee were read and approved.

Adjourned until 3 o'clock to-morrow afternoon.

JANUARY 15th, 1812, 3 o'clock, P. M.

Convention met pursuant to adjournment :

PRESENT :

JOHN SERGEANT, President.

| | | |
|--------------------|--|-----------------|
| Thomas Collins, | | Joshua Newbold, |
| Jeremiah Thompson, | | Thomas P. Cope, |
| Willet Seaman, | | Roberts Vaux, |
| Samuel Coleman, | | Joseph M. Paul, |

BENJAMIN WILLIAMS, Secretary.

The Committee of Arrangement reported as follows :

The Committee to whom was referred the Addresses from the several Abolition Societies, and the accompanying Documents, Report—

That they have carefully perused the documents and papers referred to them.

The first object that has engaged their attention is the document accompanying the address from the Abolition Society of Pennsylvania, transmitted to them by the African Institution of London, consisting of extracts from the records of the British Courts of Admiralty. It presents eleven cases of vessels captured in the years 1810, and 1811, loaded with human beings, obtained from the coast of Africa, and intended to be sold as slaves, chiefly in the Spanish colonies. The vessels in every instance carried foreign papers and foreign flags, and assumed a foreign character. But in the first of the cases it is perfectly clear that the vessel was really owned in the United States, that the adventure originated there, and that the whole interest in it, as well as the profits to be derived from the inhuman expedition, (except a small part allotted to the foreigners neces-

sarily employed to cover the transaction) belonged wholly to persons resident in the United States, and believed to be citizens. In the other cases, though there is not the same positive evidence of American ownership and interest, yet the circumstances furnish strong evidence of the fact, that the assumption of foreign character was merely colourable, and for the purpose of evading the provisions of the laws of the United States. In every case it appears that the greater portion of the officers and crew were citizens of the United States, who were in some instances to receive a part of their compensation in one or more of the human beings to be obtained from Africa. Though it seems probable that most of the cargoes were intended for foreign markets, yet there is reason to believe that some of them were to have been clandestinely conveyed into the United States, which would certainly have aggravated the offence against the laws of our country, by combining in the individual case a violation of every one of their provisions, but would not have materially increased the turpitude and gross inhumanity of the transaction. There were found on board these vessels above eight hundred and ninety-three human beings in bondage.

From this summary view of the cases presented by the extracts, your committee have naturally turned their attention to the means that may be employed to prevent a recurrence of transactions so disgraceful to the character of our country, so contrary to the policy and spirit of our laws, so cruel, inhuman, and unjust. They are not, however, aware that the legislative power of the union can, with any probability of success, be called upon at present for further measures of prevention. The laws in being plainly prohibit, under the denunciation of heavy penalties, each of the offences comprised in the

above statement of complicated criminality. The defect, therefore, if any exist, must be in one of two particulars; either the laws are not carefully enforced, or there is a want of the necessary evidence to give them effect. In each of these particulars it is the duty of every friend to the cause of humanity to aid the officers of the government in the execution of the laws, by bringing into their view the cases of offence that have heretofore occurred, or that may in future arise, and assisting them to procure the necessary evidence. Your committee therefore respectfully propose that the attention of the several societies be earnestly and particularly requested to the matters above stated, and, to produce a just sense of the duty they are thus called upon to perform, that they be furnished with copies of the extracts from the records of the admiralty.

From the several reports of the African Institution, your committee perceive with great satisfaction, the efforts they are making to introduce the blessings of civilized society and the lights of knowledge among a people who, till very lately, have been regarded by too many only as the subjects of an inhuman traffic. Whilst we earnestly unite with the institution in prayers for the success of their exertions, we cannot but feel our attention more sensibly called to similar objects within the reach of our more immediate duty. The education of the blacks, the improvement of their religious, moral, and social condition, and the inculcation among them of habits of regular industry, are matters of equal importance perhaps with the abolition itself, and without which the latter would lose all its value. Your committee cannot, on this part of the subject referred to them, refrain from expressing the pleasure they have received from the communication of the society at New-York. Under the care of that society, the best

fruits of education have already begun to appear, as your committee think they plainly perceive in the proposal of the people of colour to establish a fund among themselves for the instruction of orphan children, which indicates at once a just conception of the value of education, and a provident and active concern for those who may be destitute of the means of obtaining it. There is an encouragement in this indication, which while it affords a rich reward for their labours to the Society in New-York, will, it is hoped, have its just effect upon other societies, and stimulate them to similar efforts.

The address from the Kentucky Society is an additional proof of the extension of the principles of humanity, which your committee are sure the convention cannot but view with pleasure: Nor will they hesitate cordially to reciprocate the good wishes of that society, to co-operate with them in the object of their association, and to afford them any assistance in their power.

Your committee are sorry to find from the addresses of the New-York and New-Jersey Societies, that frequent attempts have been made to carry free blacks into slavery. The laws of the individual states can alone repress this inhuman practice, which for obvious reasons will now demand renewed vigilance. Where the laws are inefficient, or their penalties so trifling as to hold up no terrors to the offender, it will be the duty of the societies by all proper means to impress upon the constituted authorities of the state the necessity of more adequate provisions.

Under these views of the matters referred to them, your committee respectfully submit the following resolutions :

Resolved, that a committee be appointed to draft an Address to the several Abolition Societies (in-

cluding the Kentucky Society) particularly and earnestly recommending to their attention the matters embraced in the foregoing Report. Jeremiah Thompson, Samuel Coleman, Thomas P. Cope, and Roberts Vaux, were appointed.

Resolved, that the acting committee be instructed to have printed, with the minutes of the proceedings of this convention, in the form of an Appendix, the extracts from the records of the British courts of Admiralty.

Resolved, that a committee be appointed to examine the Treasurer's account. Thomas Collins, and Joseph M. Paul were appointed.

Resolved, that the letter from the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States, and the certified Resolution of Congress acknowledging the receipt, acceptance and deposit in the National Library of Clarkson's History of the Abolition of Slavery, which are on record in the minutes of the Acting Committee, be published with the minutes of the proceedings of this Convention. They are as follows; viz.

In the House of Representatives of the United States, Saturday, the 18th February, 1809.

Resolved, that the Speaker be requested to acknowledge the receipt and acceptance of "Clarkson's History of Slavery," presented by the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the Africans; and that the said work be deposited in the library.

Extract from the Journal.

PATRICK MAGRUDER, CLERK.

WASHINGTON, February 18th, 1809.

My Dear Sir,

In obedience to a Resolution of the House of Representatives of the United States, I have the honour

to acknowledge the receipt and acceptance, by the House, of "Clarkson's History of Slavery," in two volumes, presented by the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the Africans, through you sir, by the hand of Mr. Palmer: which has been deposited in the National Library: where it will remain an honourable testimonial of the liberality of the donors. Permit me sir, to embrace this opportunity, to express the very great respect, which I have for the Abolition Convention, and for yourself,

And be assured sir, that I am,
Your's and their sincere friend
And humble servant,

J. B. VARNUM.

Mr. THOS. P. COPE.

A member of the Acting Committee stated that the gentleman who had been employed to compile a History of the Abolition of Slavery, from documents furnished by former Conventions and other sources, had died soon after the rise of the last Convention: that the papers had since been deposited with the Treasurer, and remain under his care; the necessity for the proposed publication appearing to be superceded by the correct, interesting, and valuable work of Thomas Clarkson, on the same subject.

Resolved, That the Acting Committee be discharged from further attention to this subject.

The Convention proceeded to the Appointment of the Acting Committee for the ensuing three years, when the following persons were duly chosen:

Thomas Collins, *of New-York.*

Samuel Coleman, *of New-Jersey.*

Timothy Paxson,
Thomas P. Cope,
Roberts Vaux,
Benjamin Williams,

of Pennsylvania.

Joshua Newbold obtained leave of absence the remainder of the session.

Adjourned until 3 o'clock to-morrow afternoon.

JANUARY 16th, 1812, 3 o'clock P. M.

Convention met pursuant to adjournment:

PRESENT:

JOHN SERGEANT, Esq. President,

| | |
|--|--|
| Thomas Collins, Jeremiah Thompson, Willet Seaman, Samuel Coleman, | Thomas P. Cope, Samuel Smith, Roberts Vaux, Joseph M. Paul, |
|--|--|

BENJAMIN WILLIAMS, Secretary.

The Committee appointed to draft addresses to the several Abolition Societies, reported Essays of a Circular Address to them, and a special Communication to the Society in Kentucky, which were read and ordered to lie on the table.

The Committee on the Treasurer's account reported as follows, viz.

To the American Convention for the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

The Committee appointed to settle the Treasurer's account, Report:

That they have paid attention to the duty committed to them. They find the Treasurer has received since last Convention one hundred and forty dollars, dividends on bank stock; that he has paid

for the use of the Convention, for Clarkson's History, &c. and two shares of Stock of the Philadelphia Bank, two hundred and sixty-seven dollars.—There now remains due to our Treasurer thirty-seven dollars and twenty-two cents.

The funds of the Convention (being seven shares of Philadelphia bank stock, value at par one hundred dollars each,) may at the present value of stock be estimated to be about eight hundred dollars.

Respectfully submitted.

THOMAS COLLINS,
JOSEPH M. PAUL.

Philadelphia, 1 mo. (January) 1812.

Resolved that the documents which accompanied the communication from the Abolition Society of Pennsylvania, and which their representatives were instructed to request might be transmitted to their Committee of Correspondence on the rise of this Convention, be, in compliance with that request, transmitted by the Acting Committee, after the publication of the Minutes of this Convention.

The Circular Address was taken up, and carefully considered by paragraphs, and adopted, as follows, viz.

To

IN discharging the customary duty of addressing you, we have great satisfaction in stating, that the business of the Convention has been conducted, throughout, with the utmost cordiality.

We cannot, however, forbear the expression of our sincere regret, that so few societies have been represented in this Convention. When we contemplate the interesting magnitude of the cause in which we have unitedly and voluntarily embarked—when we consider the solid and obvious advantages which have hitherto been derived, to the friends of huma-

nity, from a free and personal interchange of opinion and from unison of action, we confidently trust that trifling impediments will not be suffered to interpose in the fulfilment of our duty. We therefore, in that freedom which becomes the advocates of truth and justice, do most earnestly and affectionately recommend a more zealous attention to this important point, in order that the succeeding Convention may be more fully attended. Much has been accomplished, but, when we remember that it has been officially announced by the late census that nearly twelve hundred thousand of our fellow beings remain in a state of abject bondage in our deluded country, it surely will not, cannot be denied, that much, very much, remains yet to be done. You have put your hands to the plough—look not back till ye shall have accomplished the end. You have commenced the wrestling, cease not your hold till ye shall have obtained the prize.

While against the oppressor, we plead the cause of the oppressed—While we invite the unhappy slave to a patient and Christian submission to his condition—and urge on his legalized master a humane exercise of his power—While we feel ourselves bound, by all honourable and lawful means, to protect those whom the laws have enfranchised, from being again dragged into slavery—let us not forget how much depends on the careful instruction of all who are free. Without this our labour will be but very partially accomplished. This great object, so important to ourselves, as members of the civil community, appears to have engaged the active attention of some of those who are the subjects of our care; and the Convention have learned, with heart-felt satisfaction, that it is proposed, by the people of colour in New-York, to raise a fund among themselves, for the instruction of their orphan children. This circum-

stance, while it proves an honourable testimony to the persevering zeal of the New-York Manumission Society, reflects great credit on the blacks themselves; and we hope the example will not be without beneficial effects elsewhere. Could such of these people as have it in their power, be persuaded to apply a part of their surplus earnings to the establishment of similar funds, instead, as is unhappily the case in too many instances, of spending their money in courses which prove injurious to their health and morals, not only their race, but the community at large, would from such meritorious efforts speedily reap the most unequivocal advantages.

It appears that, in defiance of the laws already provided to interdict the inhuman practice, and notwithstanding the enormity of the offence in itself, men are yet found, so lost to justice and the tender feeling of humanity, as to be guilty of carrying free blacks from some of the states, and selling them as slaves in others. We therefore recommend renewed vigilance to detect and prosecute these hardened transgressors—and that, whenever the laws are found to be defective, or insufficient to the correction of the evil, application be made, to the constituted authorities, for such amendments and alterations as may be necessary and effectual; that our country may be purged of this most grievious iniquity.

The Pennsylvania Society accompanied their address to the Convention with some very interesting documents, which were transmitted to them by the African Institution in London, part of which it is proposed to publish in the form of an appendix to our printed minutes, in order that the information which it contains may be more generally diffused. The Convention have not, at this time, deemed it necessary or expedient, to take any further order on this subject. Were the laws of the general go-

vernment, in relation to the slave trade, duly and faithfully executed, it is believed they would put an end to this inhuman traffic, which, to the disgrace of some of our citizens, it is but too evident they have been carrying on under the protection and cover of foreign flags. We invite you to a careful perusal of these documents. They contain the evidence of a mass of iniquity, the developement of which cannot but excite the indignation of every feeling mind.

You will perceive, by the minutes of our proceedings, that the friends of humanity have gained an accession to their cause in the establishment of an Abolition Society in Kentucky. We trust their labours will be blessed with success, and that this dawn of light will burst into a more perfect day on our brethren of the southern states, casting its cheering and benign influence alike on all; that the ensanguined lash of the task master, and the cries of the slave, may no longer appal the ear and sicken the heart, in this boasted land of mercy and equal rights.

The address to the Kentucky Society was again deliberately read, and adopted as follows, viz.

To the President and Members of the Kentucky Abolition Society.

Among several important, and valuable communications, forwarded to this Convention by the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, we recognize with unaffected pleasure your letter of October last, addressed to that Institution.

We sincerely rejoice to learn that you have associated for the honourable purpose of extending the arms of benevolence and protection, for the relief and

assistance of the afflicted children of Africa, in your section of our country.

We trust you will be enabled to persevere in the work which you have so nobly begun, and by a zealous employment of the means you possess, witness the happiest consummation of your efforts to attend those objects, which claim your solicitude, and partake of your care.

The cause you have espoused is a righteous one: and the reward of your labour, will be as certain, as it must be precious.

In order to furnish you with a knowledge of the various subjects which have engaged our attention during the present session, we intend to transmit to you copies of the minutes of our proceedings. As we believe it will be productive of advantage to the great object which has caused the establishment of societies of this kind, to enjoy a full communication of sentiment, and mutual information of facts to excite our diligence, we therefore invite your correspondence with us, as occasion may demand, and opportunities present.

We congratulate you on the advancement you have already made, and we present you with our ardent desires, that under the blessing of Divine Providence, success may ever crown your exertions.

To aid you in these great designs, be assured of our maternal solicitude, and we shall equally with you, hail that glorious day, when "*the bands of wickedness shall be loosed, the heavy burdens be undone, every yoke shall be broken, and the oppressed go free.*"

P. S. Our Acting Committee will acquaint you of the time and place of the meeting of the next Convention, to attend which, we should be pleased with a representation from your Society.

Resolved, that the Acting Committee be instructed to publish 500 copies of the Minutes of this Convention, and as many of the Circular Addresses as may, in their opinion, be proper; and that they transmit them to the several Societies in the usual proportions.

That they present to the Select Council of the city of Philadelphia the thanks of this Convention for the use of their Chamber—And that they be directed to give three months previous notice of the meeting of the next Convention, to the several Abolition Societies. Adjourned *sine die*.

Published by order of the Convention.

BENJAMIN WILLIAMS, Secretary.

APPENDIX.

EXTRACTS from the fourth Report of the Directors of the AFRICAN INSTITUTION, read at the Annual General Meeting, held in London, on the 28th of March, 1810.

" The persons, however, who are by far the most deeply engaged in this nefarious traffic, appear to be citizens of the United States of America. These shelter themselves from the penal consequences of their criminal conduct, by means of a nominal sale both of ship and cargo at some Spanish or Swedish port—(the Havannah, for example, or the Island of St. Bartholomew.) They are thus put in a capacity to use the flags of these states, and so disguised, have carried on their slave-trading speculations during the last year to an enormous extent.

" The different communications received by the directors from the coast of Africa, concur in stating, that in the month of October last, the coast was crowded with vessels, known to be American, trading for slaves, under Spanish and Swedish flags. The slaves thus procured, it is understood, were afterwards to be carried for sale, either to South America, or to the Spanish West Indies. Some cargoes (there is reason to believe,) have been landed at St. Bartholomews, and smuggled thence into British Islands.

" With respect to Sweden and Spain, the Directors had hoped, that as neither of these countries had any interests to sacrifice by a formal renunciation of the Slave trade, and a recognition of the principles of its abolition, they might have been prevailed on strictly to interdict the use of their flags to ships engaged in carrying slaves. But in this hope also, the directors have been disappointed. They have had, even the mortification to see these flags employed to protect that large share of this traffic, which the subjects of the United States are at this moment carrying on in defiance of the laws of their own country.

*EXTRACTS from the fifth report of the Directors of the
AFRICAN INSTITUTION, read at the Annual General
Meeting held in London on the 27th of March, 1811.*

In the month of July last, the case of the *Ameda*, an American slave ship, captured by a British ship of war, a case on which six others depended, was brought before the Privy Council, the supreme court for matters of prize in this country, by appeal from the Vice-Admiralty Court of Tortola, in which the vessel and cargo had been condemned to the captors. The judgment of the court was pronounced by Sir W. Grant, Master of the Rolls, in the following terms, viz —

" This ship must be considered as being employed at the time of capture in carrying slaves from the coast of Africa to a Spanish colony—We think that this was evidently the original plan and purpose of the voyage, notwithstanding the pretence set up to veil the true intention; the claimant, however, who is an American, complains of the capture, and demands from us the restitution of property of which he alleges that he has been unjustly dispossessed. In all the former cases of this kind which have come before this court, the slave trade was liable to considerations very different from those which belong to it now. It had at that time been prohibited (as far as respected carrying slaves to the colonies of foreign nations) by America, but by our own laws it was still allowed.—It appeared to us, therefore, difficult to consider the prohibitory law of America, in any other light than as one of those municipal regulations of a foreign state, of which this Court could not take any cognizance. But by the alteration which has since taken place, the question stands on different grounds, and is open to the application of very different principles. The slave trade has since been totally abolished by this country, and our legislature has pronounced it to be contrary to the principles of justice and humanity.

" Whatever we might think as individuals before, we could not, sitting as judges in a British Court of Justice, regard the trade in that light, while our own laws permitted it. But we can now assert that this trade cannot, abstractedly speaking, have a legitimate existence.

" When I say abstractedly speaking, I mean that this country has no right to controul any foreign legislature that may think fit to dissent from this doctrine, and to permit to its own subjects the prosecution of this trade; but we have now a right to affirm that *prima facie* the trade is illegal, and thus to throw on claimants the burthen of proof that, in respect to them, by

the authority of their own laws, it is otherwise. As the case now stands, we think we are intitled to say, that a claimant can have no right upon principles of universal law, to claim the restitution in a prize court, of human beings carried as his slaves. He must show some right that has been violated by the capture, some property of which he has been dispossessed, and to which he ought to be restored. In this case, the laws of the claimant's country allow of no right of property such as he claims. There can therefore be no right to restitution. The consequence is, that the judgment must be affirmed."

The directors have reason to believe that this judgment was in perfect conformity with the opinion of the highest legal authorities in the United States.

The great importance of this decision may be inferred from this circumstance, that it was no sooner known, than every American flag which covered the slave trade disappeared. The course which has since been pursued by the citizens of the United States embarking in this trade, has been, to call at some Spanish or Portuguese port, there to obtain fictitious bills of sale, and other papers which might serve to disguise the real ownership.

This practice, however, to which, on the first view the case of the Amedie did not seem to apply, and which it was apprehended might be carried to an extent almost indefinite, has happily received a decisive check by a judgment recently pronounced by Sir William Scott, in the high court of admiralty, in the case of a vessel called the Fortuna. For want of such a precedent as this case now happily furnishes, several vessels in precisely the same circumstances; namely, vessels destined for the slave trade, and clearly Americans, but under a Spanish disguise, had been liberated by the vice-admiralty courts in different parts of the world.

The case in which this judgment has been given is as follows:

High Court of Admiralty.—Case of the Fortuna, Verissimo, master.

THIS vessel sailed from New York, under American colours in the month of July, 1810, being then named the William and Mary, and arrived at Madeira in September. The ostensible owner at this time was an American citizen of the name of George Fowler Trenholm, who also acted as master. On arriving at Madeira, he landed a part of his cargo; and about a week before his departure from it, he executed a

bill of sale for the ship to a native of Madeira, a Portuguese subject, named Joao de Souza, and in consequence of this sale obtained Portuguese papers and assumed a Portuguese flag. This Joao de Souza is stated to be a man notoriously of no property, who is employed as a clerk in the store of an English mercantile house in that island; and in point of fact, no consideration was given for the vessel. In thus lending his name to this transaction, Joao de Souza appears to have merely complied with the wishes of his employers, who were the consignees of the William and Mary. The William and Mary, having thus become colourably the property of a Portuguese, was re-named the Fortuna, and another Portuguese, of the name of Verissimo was appointed master; George Fowler Trenholm, the former master, was now converted into a supercargo, and the whole conduct and entire control of the ship and adventure were committed to him; without his even receiving any instructions whatever from the alleged owner, Joao de Souza. The only part of the cargo taken on board at Maderia consisted of some articles of provisions for the voyage.

On the 6th of October, this vessel sailed from Madeira, and, when about seven or eight miles distant from the harbour of Funchall, was captured by his majesty's ship Melampus, captain Hawker, and sent to Plymouth.

The evidence obtained by means of the standing interrogatories, afforded strong suspicion that the sale at Madeira, was a fraudulent and collusive transaction; and this suspicion was afterwards fully confirmed, and it clearly appeared, from the mere inspection of the vessel independently of other corroborating circumstances, that the object of the voyage was to procure a cargo of slaves on the coast of Africa."

Sir William Scott who delivered the judgment of the court on the 12th of March, 1811, concludes a long and luminous exposition of this case in the following words:

"Was this American vessel employed in that traffic which subjected the Amedie to a sentence of confiscation? I think that a variety of important circumstances lead irresistibly to that conclusion. Trenholm, the present supercargo (for he continues on board this vessel, in this character, after the pretended sale of her in his character of master and owner), pretends, in an affidavit that he was not to carry on the slave trade, but meant to dispose of the cargo at the Cape de Verd Islands, or the Brazils. But this man's conduct is too deeply involved in the entire fraud of these transactions to claim any credit for his representations. The construction and furniture of the ship had all the accommodations necessary for the con-

duct of that trade, and of that trade only. She had platforms ready constructed; she had timber fit for the construction of more; she had iron shackles and bolts, running chains and collars; all adapted for the purposes of conveying slaves; and the quantity and species of provision and medicine which such purposes require. It has been suggested in argument, that the ship had probably been employed before as a slave ship and that the first accommodations had been suffered to remain, though her employment was altered; but is this probable, that they would have been suffered to remain in a vessel destined for other occupations? In other trades they would have been obstructions and nuisances, and the first thing done before she left America would have been to remove them. The continuance of such accommodations proves the intended continuance in that trade; for they are not accommodations in any other. In the concealed papers it is disclosed that she was to go to the Havanna, the great mart for the importation of negroes. When I see these platforms constructed, and an apparatus for the construction of more; these irons collected together; the nature of the provisions on board; the fraudulent sale and the fraudulent acquisition of the Portuguese character under it; the false pretences and unjust resistance to fair inquiry that has travelled with this case throughout; the particulars of which I do not detail, after the ample statements of both which have been given by the advocates for the captors, I can have no rational doubt of her real character, and under the authority of the case of the Amedie, I condemn her and her cargo."

Extract of a letter from a gentleman high in office on the coast of Africa, dated Senegal, 11th Dec. 1810.

"I had the pleasure to acknowledge, on the 1st of November, by the schooner Hope, the receipt of your obliging letter of the 17th September, and communicated to you that it was necessary for me to go to Goree, to endeavour to overcome some difficulties which had arisen relative to the four vessels detained at that island, on suspicion of being American property under Spanish colours, fitted out for the slave trade.

"My former letters will have acquainted you, that many vessels of this description are on the coast, and the intelligence you have received from leeward, will also have informed you of the still greater number in that quarter; I hope some measures have been decided upon to stop their progress, in undoing all the good which would have resulted from the honourable exertions and sacrifices of the British nation.

"I beg to call your attention to the facility with which vessels are fitted out in the port of Charlestown. I understand the utmost activity is going on in that port, in equipping vessels, fully manned and armed. All the papers of vessels from thence are vouched by a person who calls himself Carlos Mulvey, Spanish consul. At Teneriffe, the American consul, Mr. Armstrong, gives every facility to the covering American property, in the name of Mr. Thomas Armstrong, and Mr. Madden.

"I have been credibly informed, that a set of papers are furnished for a thousand dollars, and that it is notorious to every merchant in Teneriffe. It would afford me considerable satisfaction to hear of some strong measures being taken to counteract this illegal conduct.

"I doubt not sir, before this time, that the African institution has been able to induce government and the legislature to take some active and decided steps in favour of the African cause; *for until the traffic of these persons is stopped, it is in vain to hope to urge them to industry or civilization, where the safety of person and property is so uncertain.*"

*Extract of a letter from the same gentleman, dated Senegal,
February 23d, 1811.*

"The schooner George returned from Sierra Leone on the 30th of December, with intelligence that the brig Erin, of Norfolk, alias Catilina; the Mary Ann of Charlestown, alias Santa Barbara; and the Snake in the Grass, alias Aluvida, were released by the vice-admiralty courts upon paying costs of suit. The brig Pert, and ship Maria Dolores, were condemned as forfeited to his majesty. The Erin went to the Gambia, and I am informed has taken away two hundred and fifty unhappy beings; the other two vessels that were liberated are gone to leeward. When I was in Goree, I was induced to liberate a schooner under Spanish colours, but with an American Spanish supercargo on board, she has taken away from the Gambia, two hundred and thirty slaves. Two other Americans, under Spanish colours, have since November, left the Gambia, with two hundred and fifty slaves.

"In all probability other vessels will be equally successful, as, unfortunately, the wars excited in the upper part of that river, afford the means of furnishing them with slaves in abundance.

"I am convinced you will join me in lamenting the insufficiency of my authority to check this dreadful evil. I wait with

considerable impatience for your next letters, which I hope will inform me of something having been done to check the alarming increase of slave dealing on this part of the coast."

Case of the Schooner Esperanza, Jeronimo Bicenti, master, tried in the Vice-Admiralty Court of Sierra Leone, 1st May, 1810.

THIS Schooner was built in Virginia, and was called the Fair Trader. She became in 1809 the property of Jacob Ogden, jun. and John B. Frazier, of Boston, or New York, who in November 1809 gave the command of her to Benjamin Waine, a native of Boston, and now living with his wife and family in Hollway in the state of Massachusetts.

She was cleared out from Boston, to a port, or ports, in South America. On the 15th of November 1809, a letter of instructions is addressed by the above named gentleman to Mr. Waine, which Mr. Waine had carelessly omitted to leave behind him at St. Michaels. It is as follows.

"Boston, November 15th, 1809.

"Captain Waine, will proceed from this to St. Michaels, and endeavour to get his vessel put under Portuguese colors if he can do it in safety. He will obtain permission to proceed to Africa, and thence to the Havanna, and have the vessel consigned by the Portuguese merchant to Francisco Hernandez of that place, with orders to dispose of the cargo, and account with Jacob Ogden, jun. or John B. Frazier for the neat proceeds. Captain Waine, will also receive powers from his merchant to sell the vessel in Havanna if he chooses, or to proceed from thence elsewhere. The merchant in St. Michaels should be induced to write as soon as possible, and send the necessary information that we may make insurance in this place. If Captain Waine should find his expenses exceed in amount the cash which he has with him he will draw on J. B. Frazier and John Ogden, jun. and his bills shall be duly honored. Captain Waine will see that the proper documents are forwarded to us to cancel our bonds. If he should not be able to accomplish his business in St. Michaels, as it should be, he will then proceed to Teneriffe, and if Mr. William Stocker is still there he will deliver the letter to him, and receive his advice in all his transactions in that place; but if he should have left before the arrival of the schooner, he will present the letter which is directed to Messrs. Madin Brothers, and explain to them verbally the precise situation of the business, and destroy the letter to

Stocker immediately: always bear in mind that it is necessary to send us the proper information to enable us to make insurance. Before the transfer is made it will be well to see if the present captain, and his two mates, will be allowed to go in her. The men should be induced to go if possible, even if it were necessary to increase their wages considerably. The second mate may be allowed exclusive of his wages *one* of the cargo on the safe arrival of the vessel at the Havanna. It has been agreed that the first mate should have two, and if the cargo should amount to 175 on arrival in Havanna he is to have three. Yourself to receive 5 per cent. on the amount of sales in Havanna. It is an object to get a peaceable young man for your captain to carry the papers.

Before you undertake to transfer the vessel, you will see your way clear, and ascertain whether any difficulties will be likely to arise in course of your business that are insurmountable. On your arrival at St. Michaels you will pretend you are after supplies of poultry and wine, and as soon as possible do you explain your wishes to your merchant, and state to him the whole design of the voyage. Request him to forward to us a letter, directed to Hernandez, directing him to take charge of vessel and cargo on her arrival in Havanna. You will endeavour to have the complete arrangement of the expedition placed in your hands. The Portuguese captain should be made to understand that he must leave all to you. You had better get sufficient powers from your new owner to place the expedition altogether under your control. If you find you cannot do your business to your satisfaction, you may advise with your friend about touching at Fayal, where vessels' papers have frequently been changed with the greatest facility; being careful always who you get to cover the property. If you think it best to go there you are at liberty to do it. It will be a great object to get your papers without unloading; but you must get the proper documents to send us to cancel our bonds. Act in all cases fully, and endeavour to foresee the difficulties you will have to encounter. Do not let the American consul suspect that you were originally designed for the voyage which you will probably undertake from one of the western islands. The vessel must carry her cargo to Havanna, she is not at liberty to carry it any where else; and if it should so happen the vessel could not be cleared from a Portuguese port to carry her return cargo to Havanna, you will proceed to Tenneriffe, and present the letters which we gave you, and finish our business there."

Accordingly Mr. Waine proceeded to St. Michaels, where with the help of Messrs. Ivens and Burnett, merchants there,

he has the vessel transferred to one Jeronimo Bicenti, who lends his son of the same name as a captain at forty dollars a month, Mr. Waine being converted into a supercargo. The new owner signs a letter of instructions, which is written by Ivens and Burnett, in which Mr. Waine is directed to remit the proceeds, meaning, as clearly appears from other papers, the price of his and his son's services to William S. Burnett, Esq. No. 78, Queen Street, Cheapside, London, or to hand them to Mr. Jacob Barker of New York who is to pass them to the credit of Messrs. Hucklin and Auglin of St. Michaels. A letter was found on board from John Stoughton of Boston, dated November 14th 1809, to Bernard Cologan, esq. Teneriff, recommending Mr. Waine as brother to a deserving gentleman, and an enterprising young man.

Notwithstanding all this evidence, Benjamin Waine deposes that Jeronimo Bicenti was sole owner of the said schooner, and that the slaves on board were to be sold, for the real account, risk, and benefit of the said Bicenti. He takes upon himself to swear, that he believes that at the time of lading the said slaves, and at the present time, and also if the said slaves are unladen at the destined port, they did, do, and will belong to the said Bicenti, and no other.

James Usher, chief mate, was born in Rhode Island, is a freeman of the town of Bristol in that state, is married. His wife and family live in Bristol. The vessel carried rum, tobacco, and lumber, from Boston to St. Michaels, where she was sold to a Portuguese, and took in dry goods, beads, arms, and slave irons, which were exchanged for Negroes. Ninety three slaves, some rum and tobacco, are now on board. Cannot swear that the sale at St. Michaels was real.

Besides the above persons the following Americans were on board;

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| James Hington, second mate, Jephthah Trip, Charles Willis, Thomas Thompson, Obed B. Hussey, Richard Williams, Charles Grace, and Jeremiah Vail, John Brown, cook, and Thomas W. Tapley, boy. | } Seamen. |
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Case of the schooner Diana, James Berthe, master, tried in the Vice-Admiralty Court of Sierra Leone, 19th September, 1810.

THIS vessel had sailed from the island of St. Bartholomew to the coast of Africa for slaves; the ostensible owner a Mr. Touraine of St. Bartholomew. The supercargo, William Bane, states himself to be a native of New Orleans. James Berthe, the master, states himself to have been born in Baltimore, and to be a burgher of St. Bartholomews. Besides these there were on board, of Americans,

Henry Northan, of Philadelphia, aged 34 years.

William Daten, of Rhode Island, aged 23 years.

Peter Louis, of Baltimore, aged 26 years.

Case of the brig Saragozano, Juan Norberto Dolz, master, tried in the Vice Admiralty Court of Sierra Leone, on the 12th of June, 1810.

THIS vessel was built in America, and sold at the Havanna, to the captain who calls himself a Spaniard, but appears also to have been an American citizen. Sailed from the Havanna in November 1809, and was taken with 116 slaves on board in the river Sherbro in June 1810. The surgeon was Lorain Needham Rees, an Englishman by birth, but a citizen of America, where he is settled. He is married, and his residence is at Christchurch near Charlestown, South Carolina.

Adam Rees, cooper, was born at Baltimore; besides whom there were on board the following Americans.

Christoval Miller,
Richard Stevens,
Nathaniel Hodkeins,
Samuel Adams,
James Brown,
Juan Day,
Diego Drury.

Case of the Mariana, Juan Semanett, master, tried in the Vice-Admiralty Court of Sierra Leone, April 25th, 1810.

THIS vessel, a schooner sailed from the Havanna to Bristol in Rhode Island, with a cargo of molasses; at Bristol, she took in a cargo of rum, tobacco, cloth, and provision for Africa, which were exchanged for slaves on that coast in January, February, and March 1810. On the 23d April she was taken, and brought to Sierra Leone.

Thomas M. Moore supercargo of this schooner, was born at Bristol in Rhode Island, is married, his wife and two children live at Bristol, the place of his own residence. Mr. Royal Diaman of Bristol, Rhode Island, was the agent of the owners, the widow Poey and Francis Hernandez of the Havanna. The voyage commenced at Bristol, and was to have ended at the Havanna. The Spanish papers appear to have been procured from the Spanish consul at Boston, Juan Stoughton, who states the vessel to be bound to Africa, and thence to the Havanna.

John Sandford, a mariner, was born in the state of Massachusetts. The irons for confining the slaves were taken on board at Rhode Island.

Squire Woodensay, mariner, born in Massachusetts, is married. His wife and family live in that place.

Besides the above there were on board the schooner,

Juan Siriaco, a native of Bristol.

Robert Beet, a native of Salem.

Juan Perez, a native of Baltimore.

Case of the schooner Doris, Bartolomi Marcelino Mestre, master, tried in the Vice-Admiralty Court of Sierra Leone, 7th March, 1810.

This vessel, alleged to be the property of Guillermo M. Scott of Amelia Island, was cleared out from Charlestown, for South America, in November 1809; whence she sailed to the coast of Africa, under the entire direction and management of Zebulon Miller the supercargo, and had on board when taken fifty-seven slaves.

The master is a native of St. Augustin, but has lived in Charlestown—says the cargo outward was all put on board from the wharfs at Charlestown.

Zebulon Miller, supercargo and chief mate, was born in Connecticut, lives now in Charlestown, was to have a commission of 5 per cent. on sales from Guillermo Scott the sole owner; the whole management of the trade in his hands.

James or Isaac Murphy, cook, was born in Portsmouth, Virginia, but has lived in Charlestown for eleven years, where his wife and family reside; is a Freeman of Portsmouth. He states the name of the master to be Miller. There is another person on board by name Mestre, who is called the captain; but never does any duty, or gives orders as such, except when the schooner was boarded by a vessel of war. Believes the said master to have been appointed by a Mr. Everingham of

Charlestown, who is the sole owner of the captured schooner.

Mr. Everingham was generally known to be the owner of the schooner; he resides with his wife and family in Charlestown. Deponent does not believe any other person than Everingham has any interest in vessel or cargo; and had she not been captured she would have gone to Amelia Island to have disposed of her slaves for specie.

John Welch, cooper, (surety, Charles Fitzsimmonds, Charlestown) was born in New York and has lived in Albany and New York. He deposes that the masters name is Miller: knows not the owner.

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| Besides these persons there were on board, of Americans, | |
| William Colburn, second mate, | |
| William Duke, seaman, surety | J. A. Betker, Charlestown, |
| James White, do. | do. |
| Richard Caldwell, do. | John Woodman, do. |
| John Johnson, do. | J. A. Betker, do. |
| Francis Xavier, do. | Alexander Calder, do. |

Case of the schooner Emprendadera, Nicholas Junquira, master, tried in the Vice-Admiralty Court of Sierra Leone, 18th October, 1810.

THIS vessel, alleged to be the property of Joachim Madan, Nephew and Sons, of the Havanna, cleared out from Charlestown, South Carolina, in June 1810 for the coast of Africa, with a cargo taken on board there consisting of gunpowder, dry goods, tobacco, rum, gin, &c. to be bartered for slaves on the coast of Africa; and was detained by the British frigate the Crocodile on the 8th October, 1811.

Thomas Windsor, chief mate, was born in Philadelphia, has lived in Charlestown for the last seven years; is a freeman of that town, and his wife and children live there: says that in the Spanish service the captain is only nominal, the first mate has all the charge.

A passenger of the name of Richard Crawford, an American, was on board, and was landed at the Plantanes on the coast of Africa.

Rodolph Manly, seaman, was born in St. Marys county in the state of Maryland; is a freeman of Baltimore.

Case of the brig Doso Amicos, taken 7th October 1810, tried in the Vice-Admiralty Court of Sierra Leone, 23d October 1810.

WILLIAM RICHMOND, acting master and supercargo, (the master Blas O'Kelly, having died October 4th 1810,) stated

that he was born in Bristol, Rhode Island; is a freeholder of Bristol, where his wife and family reside; that the crew were all Americans, and came on board at Bristol, April 2d 1810; that he knew the schooner first in Newport, she was formerly called the George; she belonged then to the Insurance Company to whom she had been abandoned; that Mr. Joseph Smith, of Rhode Island, bought her of this company, and sent her to the Havanna, with a cargo of Lumber; where she was sold to Mr. Francis Hernandez the present owner; that she sailed from the Havanna, to Bristol in Rhode Island; with molasses and sugar; that she there took in rum, tobacco, and some provisions which were hoisted in from the wharf at Bristol, and which were disposed of at the Galinas, on the coast of Africa for slaves.

John Jennett, cooper, of the said brig, was born in Wilmington, near Philadelphia, has lived there all his life, has a vote at Wilmington, for New-Castle. He agrees in his evidence with Richmond.

John Williamson, seaman, was born in Wickford, Rhode Island; where he has lived all his life; heard the brig was formerly called the Two Friends. Agrees in his evidence with Richmond.

James Higgins, seaman, was born in Bath, in the state of Massachusetts, and lives there now.

Case of the brig Carlotta Teresa, Thomas Basques, master, tried in the Vice-Admiralty Court of the Bahama Islands, April 1811.

On the 3d of April 1810, this vessel sailed from the port of Norfolk in America, bound on a voyage to the coast of Africa, for a cargo of slaves; with which she was to return to the Havanna. Mr. Zacheus Atkins was the supercargo, and was charged with the purchase of the Negroes. On the 4th of December, this brig arrived at Loango, and there took on board 279 slaves; with which she sailed on the 5th of February, 1811, for the Havanna. On the 27th day of March, she was detained by his Britannic majesty's brig Variable, and brought into New Providence, for adjudication.

Among the crew were the following natives of America; viz.

Zacheus Atkins, first mate, and supercargo, a native of Massachusetts,

Roy Booth, second mate, a native of Virginia,

Caleb M. Grozer, third mate, a native of Boston,

Santiago Archer, cooper, a native of New York,

Wm. D. Pendleton, mariner, a native of Connecticut,
 John Class, mariner, a native of Boston,
 Cornelius Lombard, mariner, a native of Boston,
 Sanliago Clark, mariner, a native of Baltimore,
 William Taverner, mariner, a native of Baltimore,
 Watson Harris, mariner, a native of Virginia,
 Harry Atkins, boy, an American negro.

These people, were shipped on board the Carlotta Teresa, at Norfolk; to which port, she had brought from the Havanna, a cargo, consisting of molasses, logwood, and rum, consigned to Mr. John Faun, of that place. Having unloaded this cargo, and undergone considerable repairs, and alterations, being turned from a schooner into a brig, she took on board a cargo, which the invoice states to have been shipped by Thomas Armstead, by the order of John H. Fawn, for Africa; consisting of East India cloth, and a variety of other articles, amounting to \$13,859 45, the whole consigned to Z. Atkins. The invoice is dated Norfolk, August, 30 1810.

The Spanish consul at Norfolk, Antonio Angote Villalobas, appears to have been active in granting every facility for the equipment of this vessel, knowing as appears from various documents signed by him; that her destination was to the coast of Africa, for a cargo of slaves.

The alleged owner of the ship and cargo in this adventure; is Francisco Antonio de Comas, of the Havanna. There seems great reason however to believe, that he is not the real owner; but that Atkins the supercargo, Mr. Fawn of Norfolk, and Thomas Martin and Co. of Charlestown have a concern in it. The whole of the instructions show that Basques, was only nominally captain, his appointment being intended as a blind.

The whole of the depositions which were taken, concur in stating that there was an American flag on board; and the captain admits that the crew were all Americans, except himself, and the boatswain, cook, and carpenter.

Atkins, the supercargo, states himself to have been born in Massachusetts, but to have lived some time at New Orleans. He was to receive 10 per cent. as a commission, on the sale of the negroes.

Grozer, states himself to be a married man, and to have a family at Massachusetts.

W. D. Pendleton, states himself to have been born in New London, Connecticut, but that he now resides in New-York, having a wife and family there. He further states, that Mr. Atkins was part owner of the brig when taken, together with a merchant in Norfolk, whose name he does not recollect; grounds this on Atkins own statement; that Mr. Atkins ship-

ped part of the goods, and the merchant before mentioned the other part; and that he understood from Mr. Atkins, and believes that the slaves purchased on the coast of Africa, were for the real account, risk, and benefit of Atkins, and the said merchant.

Leigh Roy Booth, second mate, was born in Virginia, but has lived at Boston, for eleven years. He deposes that when he first knew the brig, which was more than two years ago, in Hampton Roads, Virginia; she was called the Sally Barker, and believes she was built in Massachusetts; that she went to the Havanna, and was there sold; that she afterwards went from the Havanna to Norfolk, and thence to Loango, whence she carried a cargo of slaves to the Havanna, that Peter Francisco Fitzpatrick, was then master of her; that being refitted she went on another voyage to Africa, and returned with slaves to the Havanna; that from the Havanna she went to Norfolk, where the present voyage commenced; that she was under the direction of Messrs. Goram and Comez, and at Norfolk, of Mr. Fawn and Mr. Armstead; that Mr. Atkins the supercargo, was in fact the captain also.

James Clark, a native of New York, resides at Baltimore, where he has a wife and one child. He believes that captain Atkins was the owner of the brig and cargo; understood so at Norfolk. On board the brig, Atkins spoke of the property as his.

Case of the Brig El Alrevido, Ponce de Leone, Master, tried in the Vice-Admiralty Court of the Bahamas, April 15th, 1811.

THE vessel had been an American vessel, named the Carolina, owned by William Broadfoot, a merchant in Charlestown. She was sent from Charlestown, to St. Marys river, for the purpose of receiving Spanish papers, and a bill of sale was executed by Broadfoot, bearing date at Amelia Island, on the 17th June, 1810, for the nominal sum of 6000 dollars, to George Atkinson, of Amelia Island, who appears to be an American subject. The sale however, appears to have been clearly fictitious. On the 20th of July, the vessel sailed for Africa, and having taken on board two hundred and nineteen slaves, sailed for Amelia Island; and on the 15th of March, was taken off that Island by his Britannic majesty's brig Colibri, captain Thompson.

A great many papers were produced, some signed Enrique White, governor of St. Augustin, and some by Joze de Zubzenata, secretary of government, and multiplying certificates

of the sale of this vessel by Broadfoot to Atkinson, on the 10th of June 1810; and of the Spanish citizenship of Atkins. These certificates however betray some ground of suspicion. One deponent called Fernando de la Maxe Arridondo, swears, at St. Augustin, before the secretary of the government, on the 5th of July, 1810, "that he has heard the arrival of the vessel which forms the subject of these proceedings was expected, the said George Atkinson having acquired the property thereof; that he never understood any thing to the contrary, nor that any foreigner is either directly, or indirectly concerned therein." Other depositions are equally vague.

The muster roll contains among others the following names.

| | | |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Second mate, | Jonathan Bruce, | American, |
| Mariner, | Zcs. Wragg, | ditto, |
| Do. | A. Hays, | ditto, |
| Carpenter, | Joseph Goyer, | ditto, |
| Mariner, | Richard Watson, | ditto, |

The outward cargo appears to have been laden by the orders of George Atkinson. His instructions to the nominal are dated Amelia Island, July 18, 1810, and contain no orders as to the sale of the cargo; but merely, "upon your arrival on the coast, you will receive the necessary instructions" (it does not say from whom) "relative to the purchase of negroes."

The following letter was found on board without any address.

"DEAR SIR,
Charlestown, 10th July, 1810."
"I have got a number of *slaves goods*, due me in the river Congo, say thirty from Mafuka Town. Twenty from Prince Mafitta, and about twenty from Mafouka Youmba. I do hereby agree, and bind myself, that if you will go out by *some conveyance*, and collect the above debts, and ship the amount by some good opportunity, either to England, any part of the United States, or to Havanna, in ivory, gold dust, or wood, to allow you one half of the nett proceeds of the amount so collected. Wishing you a pleasant time, I remain, dear sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed)

WILLIAM BROADFOOT.

Adam Hays, seaman was born in Pennsylvania, is an American subject, believes the property to be Mr. Atkinson's, who he was told was a merchant and planter in Amelia Island. Knows not what country he is of.

Joseph Wragg, seaman, was born in Georgia, has lived in Charlestown about nine years. Agrees with Hays in his evidence.

Leon de Ponce, master, believes the vessel and cargo to be the property of George Atkinson, who resides on St. John's in East Florida; that a bill of sale was executed to him by William Broadfoot, in June 1810, but he thought one of the witnesses to the bill of sale saw no consideration money paid for the said ship. The vessel before this sale was called the Carolina.

Joseph Goyer, was born in Boston, has lived for the last fourteen years in Charlestown. Agrees with Adam Hayes.

Jonathan Bruce, second mate, was born in Boston, where he now lives. Agrees in his deposition with Adam Hayes.

Samuel B. Robinson, a passenger, was born in Nottinghamshire, in England; has lived in England, except the last fifteen months, six of which he passed in Amelia Island, and the remaining eight at sea on board the said brig; considers Liverpool as his place of residence. States himself to be a merchant; that his object in going to Africa was to collect outstanding debts due to a merchant in Charlestown.

This Robinson, was afterwards fully proved to have been a surgeon.

Case of the brig Lucia, Scarnelia master, tried in the Vice Admiralty court of Sierra Leone. April 1810.

This vessel sailed from Charleston in South Carolina, ostensibly bound to the Havanna in July or August 1809. The real purpose of the voyage was to go to Madeira, there procure Portuguese papers, and proceed thence to the coast of Africa for slaves to be carried for sale to the Havanna. Being unable to reach that island, the vessel went into Grand Canary. Here the owners Freeman Wing, and Archibald Mac Williams, transfer the vessel, and cargo to one Don Joseph Navando, by a bill of sale, the price being to be paid at the Havanna. These two persons continue on board; also the American crew, to whom four Spaniards are added.

Thomas Boston, a seaman, born in Nantucket, has a wife living in Charlestown, which is the place of his abode, deposes that the Lucia was the Albert of Charlestown, until her name was changed at Grand Canary; that she continued before, and after this change, under the direction of Freeman Wing the supercargo. He believes in his conscience that no sale was really made, but that the property is now as at first, vested in the said Wing and Mr. Mac Williams.

Both Wing and Mac Williams admit themselves to have been owners of the brig previous to the sale, at Grand Canary. Wing was born in Massachusetts, lives at Charlestown, where he has a wife.

The vessel was taken the 24th of March 1810, with 129 slaves on board.

John Higgs, a seaman, resides chiefly at Rhode Island.

Thomas James Bolton, a passenger, was born in Massachusetts, has lived of late on the coast of Africa as a slave trader.

Henry Wing assisted in getting irons and handcuffs on board at Charleston. In consequence of this it had become plain that the vessel was going for slaves; seamen therefore could not be got, owing to their dislike to this voyage, until double wages were given. He believes Freeman Wing to be owner of brig and cargo.

Case of the Arrogancia Castillano, Jose Hernandez master, tried in the High Court of Admiralty at London in May, 1811.

This vessel sailed from Bristol in Rhode Island, the beginning of November 1810 with a cargo, including charges, amounting to £12,517 10. The invoice bears date the 31st October, at Bristol, Rhode Island, and purports that the goods were put on board this vessel bound to Angola, by Charles D. Wolff, jun. on account and risk of Juan Baptiste Yeard, and Francisco Hermanzer of the Havanna, and consigned to Mathias Munroe, mate and supercargo.

This vessel was an American vessel, called the Maria and Nancy, and was said to have been sold for 5,500 dollars to Don Juan Baptiste Yeard, by captain William York. She brought a cargo from the Havanna to New York, and then went from Bristol, on her present voyage to Angola. She cleared out at the customhouse of Bristol, for Teneriffe, with a cargo of merchandise, 30th October, 1810. The Spanish consul, at Boston, grants his certificate, dated Boston, 1st November, 1810, to the master, stating that as he was going to Africa for new negroes, he was at liberty to take a crew not Spanish.

The letter of instructions from J. B. Yeard, to Don Mathias Munro, tells him to proceed to the coast of Angola, where he is to use his utmost exertions to purchase a full cargo of slaves; men, men-boys, boys and women, but no small girls, and to proceed with them to the Havanna direct. The captain is ordered to follow all Munroe's advice, in this business, he not being at all acquainted with the Guinea business.

The boatswain, Antonio Constantino, swore, that the property of this vessel was in Charles D. Wolff, jun. and Mathias Munroe. He had heard them say so.

MINUTES
OF
THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Fourteenth American Convention
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY,
AND
IMPROVING THE CONDITION
OF
THE AFRICAN RACE:
ASSEMBLED
AT PHILADELPHIA,

On the ninth day of January, 1815—On the eighth day of January, 1816—and by adjournments until the twelfth of the same month, inclusive.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRINTED BY W. BROWN, CHURCH ALLEY.
1816.

MINUTES
OF
THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Fourteenth American Convention
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, &c.

SELECT COUNCIL CHAMBER.

January 9th, 1815.

THIS being the day appointed by the Constitution for the meeting of the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of slavery, &c. several members assembled.

James Milnor was appointed Chairman, and Benjamin Williams Secretary.

It appearing that Delegates from the Pennsylvania Abolition Society only were present, a quorum was not formed.

On motion Resolved, That the Meeting of the American Convention, &c. be adjourned to the second Monday in January 1816, and that the chairman be requested to address letters to the presiding officers of the societies usually represented in this convention, giving them information of this result. And also that he address letters to such persons in

other states as he may deem likely to promote either a delegation from them, or communications respecting the state of our concern in their vicinity. Adjourned.

Attest

BENJAMIN WILLIAMS, Sect'y.

SELECT COUNCIL CHAMBER.

January 8th, 1816.

THIS being the period to which the Convention adjourned to meet, the following members attended—viz.

James Milnor, Benjamin Tucker, Joseph M. Paul, and Roberts Vaux.

James Milnor was appointed Chairman pro tem. and Roberts Vaux Secretary pro tem.

It was stated that representatives had been appointed by the New York and Delaware Societies, and that they were expected in Philadelphia on or before the 9th. inst.

On motion Resolved, That when the convention adjourn it do adjourn to meet to-morrow morning at 11 o'clock. Adjourned.

JANUARY 9, 1816.

Convention met pursuant to adjournment.

Representatives attended from Pennsylvania and Delaware, who, not forming a quorum, adjourned to meet to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock.

JANUARY 10, 1816.

Convention met pursuant to adjournment.

A sufficient representation appearing to be present to form a quorum for the regular transaction of the business of the convention, credentials were then produced, in conformity to which the following persons were duly appointed by their respective societies to represent them in this convention, viz.

Pennsylvania—Thomas P. Cope, Timothy Paxson, James Milnor, John Sergeant, Joseph M. Paul, Roberts Vaux, Benjamin Tucker, Joseph R. Jenks, Joseph Lea, and Benjamin Williams.

New York—Nathan Comstock, Robert C. Cornell, Joseph Curtis, Isaac Hatch, Reuben Leggett, Willet Seaman, Thomas Tucker, William W. Wooden, Isaac M. Ely, and James Nelson.

Delaware—John Reynolds, Cyrus Newlin, Joseph Bringhurst, and Evan Lewis.

Of whom were present, James Milnor, Thomas P. Cope, Joseph M. Paul, Roberts Vaux, Benjamin Tucker, Joseph R. Jenks, from Pennsylvania.—Reuben Leggett, Isaac M. Ely, and Thomas Tucker, from New York.—And John Reynolds, Cyrus Newlin, Joseph Bringhurst, and Evan Lewis, from Delaware.

JAMES MILNOR was unanimously chosen **PRESIDENT**, **JOHN BACON** (a member of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society) **SECRETARY**, and **THOMAS P. COPE** **TREASURER**.

Reuben Leggett, Evan Lewis, and Joseph M. Paul were appointed to examine and settle the account of the treasurer of the convention.

Such part of the minutes of the last convention as it was thought necessary at this time to notice were read.

The following communications from the Pennsylvania, New York, and Delaware societies were read, and referred for consideration to a committee of arrangement, who were desired to report to a future meeting such matter as might appear to them necessary to claim the attention of the convention.

Thomas Tucker, Roberts Vaux, and Evan Lewis were appointed.

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

THE approaching period for holding your triennial assembly has occasioned a recurrence to your last circular address and minutes of proceedings. We well recollect that the reading of that address in our quarterly meeting of April 1812 had a peculiarly animating effect. It was heard with mingled emotions of pain and pleasure. Pain at the prospect of the magnitude of the work yet to be accomplished and smallness of the number of labourers—Pleasure at the zeal and activity manifested by those engaged, increased by the hope that their earnest and affectionate call for assistance would be heard, answered, and complied with.

On the part of this society we are sorry to say much has not been done. A concise summary of the little we have attempted we now proceed to lay before you.

The memorial to our state legislature, alluded

to in our last address to your body, soliciting the enactment of a law more effectually to punish and prevent the practice of kidnapping, was prepared and presented by a committee expressly deputed to the seat of government for that purpose in the spring of 1812. The memorial was read in both houses, and referred by the lower to a committee, who subsequently reported a bill drawn by counsel of this society embracing sundry amendments to the existing laws of Pennsylvania relative to the subjects of the memorial. The bill was not acted upon at that time, nor has it been taken into consideration since.

In the early part of last year a proposition was made in our state legislature to create a distinction between the white and coloured inhabitants of the state, in the punishment of crimes, extremely degrading to the latter. Against this partiality and injustice we remonstrated by memorial. The proposed alteration of the criminal code did not prevail.

About the same time we addressed congress and the executive on the subject of the African slave trade carried on by citizens of the United States under cover of foreign flags; suggesting the propriety of opening a friendly discussion with those governments whose flags were so employed in order to correct or prevent such abuses. The lateness of the session when the memorial was presented, and the multiplicity of business claiming a priority of attention, prevented its being acted on at that time, and no suitable opportunity has since occurred to press for the consideration.

Our acting committee have attended to the duties of their appointment with their usual care, and have extended advice, relief, and assistance in numerous instances. There is one practice, however,

very prevalent in this city which has hitherto baffled their exertions to suppress it, and against which there appears to be no legal remedy. Poor people of colour are enticed by the artful and unprincipled to bind out their children for a term of years—generally under the specious pretexts of relieving the parents from a burthen and providing comfortable places for the children, and sometimes by the payment of a sum of money. For a valuable consideration an immediate transfer is made of the indenture, and the child cannot be traced to its new owner.

The society being in possession of a handsome lot of ground in this city, have had a neat two storied brick building erected thereon, fitted up for a school house; and schools for the free instruction of children of both sexes opened therein under the superintendance of a board of education. One for boys, committed to the care of a competent male teacher in the lower room, and another for girls, taught by a female in the upper. Three hundred and three children have partook of the benefits of the institution since its establishment, and there are now seventy males and fifty females enjoying its advantages. These are small numbers compared with the black population of the city, objects of this charity—but our funds are too limited at present to embrace a greater.

While, however, we regret the incompetency of our powers to do more in this particular, we rejoice in being able to state that the coloured people themselves, aware of the inestimable advantages of education, have turned their own attention to the important subject. Several pay schools are supported by those parents able and willing to educate their children—several free schools are established and maintained by religious and benevo-

lent societies for the poor of their respective congregations, and for the destitute generally—and many young men apply a part of their hard earnings through the day to the acquisition of school learning in the long winter evenings. In addition to which the school long since established by the society of friends is still maintained, and has at present nearly one hundred scholars enjoying its benefits. So that upon the whole this branch of our concern appears to be in a flourishing situation.

Although it is manifest that in regard to some of the objects of our association a tide of prejudice, popular and legislative, sets strong against us; yet in respect to others, we are stemming the torrent, assisted by a favoring breeze, and have a fair prospect of ultimately reaching the desired haven. Much has been done for this oppressed race of human beings. There are many well wishers to the righteous cause, willing to do more at every suitable opportunity—in due time these shall reap a plenteous reward if they faint not.

We have appointed Thomas P. Cope, Timothy Paxson, James Milnor, John Sergeant, Joseph M. Paul, Roberts Vaux, Benjamin Tucker, Joseph R. Jenks, Joseph Lea, and Benjamin Williams our representatives in this convention, and as usual annexed a list of officers.

Signed on behalf of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

THOMAS PARKER, Vice President.

Attest, **BENJAMIN WILLIAMS, Sect'y.**

**LIST OF OFFICERS
OF THE
Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of
Slavery, &c. for the year 1815.**

President....CASPAR WISTAR, M. D.

**Vice Presidents.... { THOMAS PARKER,
JOSEPH M. PAUL.**

Treasurer....THOMAS PHIPPS.

**Secretaries.... { BENJAMIN WILLIAMS,
ABRAHAM L. PENNOCK.**

Counsellors—William Lewis, William Rawle, John Hallowell, John Sergeant, William L. Delany, George Vaux, Peter A. Browne, (Philadelphia); Abraham Chapman, (Bucks); John Ross, (Northumberland); Charles Smith, (Lancaster); George Fisher, (Dauphin).

Electing Committee—William Master, Thomas Phipps, Gilbert Gaw, Benjamin H. Yarnall, Abraham L. Pennock, Joseph Parker, William Wayne, jun. Benjamin Cresson, William Bryant, Isaac Smedley, Philip Price, jun. Joseph Walton.

Board of Education—Joseph Clark, Benjamin Tucker, Thomas Phipps, Joseph M. Paul, Abraham L. Pennock, Joseph Walton, William Wayne, jun. Charles C. French, Philip Price, jun. Joseph Lea, Thomas Shipley, Benjamin H. Yarnall, Lindzey Nicholson.

Committee of Correspondence—Timothy Paxson, Thomas P. Cope, Benjamin Williams, Nathan Smith, Abraham L. Pennock, Roberts Vaux, Jonah Thompson.

To the Convention of Delegates for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African race, to be assembled at Philadelphia, on the ninth day of the next month:

"THE New York Society for promoting the manumission of slaves, and protecting such of them as have been, or may be liberated," feeling a renewed conviction of the benefit, which may result from occasional meetings of a convention, composed of the different abolition societies; and believing, that the cause of justice and humanity may be further promoted by the exertions of our brethren, when convened from various parts of the union, we are induced at this time to address you, as our fellow-labourers, in promoting this great work, which is intimately connected with the welfare of millions of the human race, who still continue in a state deplorable and wretched.

Your circular address of 1812, to the several abolition societies, has been received; the tenor of which is calculated to encourage not only the well meant endeavours of individuals, but also of associated bodies, in their zeal and efforts towards the accomplishment of the important object of our institutions. This object is nothing less than the total extinction of a species of human degradation, nefarious in its origin, contrary to every principle of humanity, and repugnant to the purity of that religion which breathes "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men."

Although we are sensible that much has been done by individuals as well as by legislative interposition, both in Europe and America, towards promoting the abolition of the slave trade, and the emancipation of our fellow men from slavery; yet,

while, on the one hand, the slave trade is tolerated under any modification, and; on the other, we have to contemplate the melancholy fact, that in our own country there still remain in bondage more than a million of the human family, we must acknowledge there is still much to be done ere these great evils can be removed, and we be enabled to wash our hands in innocence, and to rejoice in the deliverance of so many unhappy captives.

In tracing the progress of individuals who have nobly embarked in the cause of benevolence, we have seen the wonderful effects of a steady uniform perseverance. Of this, we have a remarkable instance in the exertions of Thomas Clarkson, who has long been a zealous and successful labourer in the abolition of the slave trade, and who, in his treatise on the history of that subject, has done much towards enlightening the mind, by pourtraying the dreadful consequences of slavery. As it is desirable that we should use all justifiable means to inform the understanding, as well as to soften the heart, would not the distribution of this work among our southern brethren, especially if it were compressed into one volume, be productive of good, and calculated to promote the cause in which we are engaged. Our benevolent friend Thomas Clarkson and his coadjutors were very active in spreading tracts on the subject: thereby gradually paving the way for the accomplishment of the great object in which they finally succeeded. If the convention should think well of the measure, some plan might be devised for the abridgment, and the circulation of a large number of them.

We cannot but regret that the laws of the United States should be defective in any point, whereby avaricious unprincipled men are enabled to

clude their operation. The British parliament found their first act of abolition deficient: but, by a supplementary one, which makes the violation of it a felony, punishable by transportation, or imprisonment and hard labour, at the discretion of the court, the probability is that it now operates in terrorem, and may eventually be effectual. If our government were to do the like, it might prove to be a co-operation of power not to be resisted. Of the propriety of addressing congress on this subject, also, as it relates to domestic slavery, we leave the convention to judge.

Since the last meeting of the convention we made an application to our legislature, soliciting the entire abolition of slavery in this state. We were encouraged to hope that success would attend our exertions; as the governor had mentioned the subject favourably in his speech: but, owing to a concurrence of adverse circumstances in the course of the session, we were disappointed. As we still, however, entertain a prospect of finally succeeding, we shall not relax our exertions until the object be accomplished.

The education of the children of the African race continues to claim our serious and unremitting attention. We have recently built a school house on a lot of ground presented to the society by the corporation of this city, which will accommodate about two hundred and fifty scholars; with this number we hope shortly to have it filled; and as this is a subject of primary importance, and intimately connected with the progress of emancipation, we trust it will become a more prevailing concern in every part of our country.

The standing committee, on whom more particularly devolves the active service of promoting the manumission of slaves, and protecting such of

them as have been liberated, appear to have become vigilant in performing the duties assigned them. Since our last address to you, they have succeeded in extending to one hundred and twenty three of our fellow beings the blessings of freedom; and they have now forty five undecided cases under their care.

Although, in the course of our attention to this work of benevolence, we have had to encounter many difficulties, which will always be the case where avarice and prejudice are combined to oppose the efforts of philanthropy and the dictates of religion; yet, while we are acting on conscientious ground, and feel the rectitude of our movements, we shall be enabled to rise superior to every attempt, whether secret or open, to counteract and oppose this work of justice and humanity. May we, therefore, rely on that Power which is altogether sufficient; and, under the influence of divine aid, faithfully persevere in the cause which we have espoused.

We have chosen as delegates, to represent us in the next convention, the following persons: namely,

Nathan Comstock, Robert C. Cornell, Joseph Curtis, Isaac Hatch, Reuben Leggett, Willet Seaman, Thomas Tucker, and William W. Wooden.

The following is a list of the officers of this society at the present time.

President....CADWALLADER D. GOLDEN.

*Vice Presidents.... { VALENTINE SEAMAN,
GEORGE NEWBOLD.*

*Secretaries.... { JEREMIAH THOMPSON,
THOMAS TUCKER.*

Treasurer....JOHN MURRAY, JUN.

Register....NATHAN COMSTOCK.

Benjamin Clark, Cadwallader D. Colden, Thomas Addis Emmett, Peter A. Jay, Peter Jay Munro, William Sampson, William Slosson, John Wadsworth, Counsellors.

Willet Robbins, chairman, and Reuben Leggett, secretary, of the Standing Committee.

Sylvanus F. Jenkins, chairman, and Thomas Collins, secretary, of the Trustees of the School.

Willet Seaman, chairman, and Walter Sawyer, secretary, of the Committee of Ways and Means.

George Newbold, chairman, and William Slosson, secretary, of the Committee of Correspondence.

Signed by order, and in behalf of the Society,
by

CADWALLADER D. COLDEN, President.

JEREMIAH THOMPSON, Secretary.

New York, 12th. mo. (December) 12th. 1814.

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African race:

THE "New York Society for promoting the manumission of slaves, and protecting such of them as have been, or may be liberated," has been recently informed that a meeting of the American Convention will be held in Philadelphia in the ensuing week. This intelligence has afforded much satisfaction to the society in New York; and it is hoped that the concentrated information, and the united labours of the delegates who may assemble,

will be productive of effects highly favourable to the great object of emancipation.

A communication which was intended to have been laid before the convention last year, and which is now forwarded, will acquaint it with the subjects which this society is desirous of bringing under its notice. To this communication it is not thought necessary to make much addition. It may not, however, be unacceptable to the convention to be informed, that, since the date of that address, the manumission society of this city, by the efforts of its standing committee, has been the instrument of procuring the freedom of fifty-eight human beings; and thirty-three unfinished cases are, at present, under the care of its committee.

It is also cause of great satisfaction to be able to state, that the hopes which were entertained in respect to the school under the care of this society, have been fully realized. During the past year, an average of more than two hundred children have been taught in it; and the number of scholars, at the present time, of both sexes, is two hundred and fifty-eight. Although the funds of the society have been, for some years, principally derived from private donations and subscriptions, it is now but justice to the legislature of this state to mention, that this institution has received a handsome proportion of a fund, which has been liberally appropriated for the purpose of promoting and encouraging common schools in every part of the state. And it is hoped that this liberal and permanent appropriation, with its other sources of income, will enable the society still further to enlarge its school, and thereby be of increased benefit to the community.

In addition to the delegates previously chosen to represent this society in the convention, it has

also appointed Isaac M. Ely and James Nelson, to whom, with their colleagues, the society refers the convention for further explanations of its prospects and opinions.

The offices of the society are filled by the same persons as is mentioned in the communication accompanying this, except as follows:

Robert C. Cornell has been appointed registrar—Isaac M. Ely, a counsellor, in the place of John Wadsworth—Joseph Curtis, chairman, and George F. White, secretary, of the Standing Committee—And John Murray, jun. chairman of the Trustees of the School.

Signed by order, and in behalf of the society aforesaid, in New York, the 6th of the 1st month, (January) 1816.

GEORGE NEWBOLD, Vice President.

JEREMIAH THOMPSON, Sect'y.

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

IN addressing the convention after a lapse of four years, it would be peculiarly gratifying to the Delaware Society for promoting the abolition of slavery, could we report a progress in the cause of liberty and justice commensurate with our wishes, and with the opportunities which so long a period might be supposed to afford. When we look back at the bright prospects which opened on this cause within the last twenty years, and recur to the joyful feelings excited by the just anticipations of speedy success in this conflict with cruelty and wrong, we cannot but feel the pressure of that

gloom which is the consequence of disappointment and defeat.

These feelings have been rendered more acute by a review of the numbers who have deserted us. In the hour of trial many of the timid and the luke-warm have left our ranks, and those who felt themselves bound to support this righteous standard, yielding to the weight of discouragement which pressed on them from various quarters, became less active than the state of the times required.

It is hardly necessary to state that the consequence has been an extension of the traffic in human beings, and the grossest violations of natural justice. Animated by the confidence of impunity, the kidnapper has invaded the dwelling of the freeman, and dragged his victims into exile and slavery.

The difficulties which have conspired to produce this state of things have been various; but we may trace their origin to that fruitful source of evil, "the love of money." The increasing demand for the produce of the southern states has induced the planter to offer high prices for slaves. The pernicious effects of this offer are extensively manifest—Its poison has been insinuated into various classes of society—The slave holder has powerfully felt it, and it has given birth to a numerous and loathsome brood of dealers in human flesh, whose activity and perseverance are worthy a better cause. But it is a circumstance of the deepest regret that this baleful influence has been felt in our courts of justice, and in our state legislature. Professional men in the former, who were once connected with this society, have accepted fees to plead against the innocent, and to advocate the cause of the oppressor—and in the latter, a law has been enacted affecting those who are free,

which militates not only against the plainest rights of man, but affords to the unprincipled dealer easy opportunity to sell them into perpetual slavery. We have cause of humble gratitude to the Benevolent Ruler of the universe in that under our excellent mode of government he has sown the seed of reform at the root of every national evil. Where the mind of man is unshackled—where he is free to think, *gross evils* cannot long lay unnoticed nor unlamented, and where he is at liberty to express his sentiments they will be exposed; happily for the cause in which we are engaged, the evils we lament have advanced to this crisis—a feeling of indignity at these violations of justice begins to be manifest. A petition expressive of this feeling, and couched in energetic language, has been circulated—a large number of the most respectable citizens of this place of different religious denominations have given it their sanction, and we hope our legislature will have sufficient virtue to accede to our request, and abolish a law so disgraceful in its nature and dishonourable to our state.

This society too, as the guardian of those rights which our laws acknowledge to belong to the descendants of Africa, has been animated to renew its exertions in their behalfe. Some of our members who had seriously contemplated a dissolution of the society, under an idea that its existence was detrimental to the cause of emancipation, have consented again “to take the labouring oar,” and a number of younger men who have lately joined us, seem cordially disposed to bear a part in this honourable toil. Accounts have lately been received from our fellow labourers in the lower counties of this state, which convey the pleasing information of increasing concern and activity amongst them for the protection and welfare of this people. A petition

against the law before alluded to has been circulated in that quarter, and we understand they have a representation to attend to the subject before the legislature. The subject of education, so closely connected with the cause of abolition, we are happy to state has received considerable attention in this place. A society, formed a few years since for the express purpose of educating black and coloured children, has a school now under its care taught by a black man—about thirty scholars are constantly receiving the benefits of the institution, and by the facility with which they take instruction, are silently, but certainly undermining the prejudice which has existed unsavourable to their capacities. The foundation of a library of religious and moral publications for the use of the children of this school has been laid, and we hope it may prove a useful auxiliary to their most important interests. It is with pleasure too that we recur to the general state of the free black population in this vicinity. When we consider the almost total want of moral education which this poor people suffer—when we consider the hardships of a state of slavery, where necessity sometimes compels to dishonesty, we are prepared not only to expect, but mentally to palliate occasional deviations from the path of rectitude—but in this case it is honourable to *them* and cause of encouragement to *us*, that we are enabled to say, they are equally honest and industrious—quite as sober and orderly as other citizens in the same sphere of life. They have two meeting houses in this place which are well attended, and an increase of order and good conduct, the regular consequence of religious concern, is observable among them.

We have appointed John Reynolds, Cyrus Newlin, Joseph Bringhurst, and Evan Lewis to attend the ensuing convention as our delegates.

The following are the Officers of the Society.

President....ISAAC DIXON.

Vice President....CYRUS NEWLIN.

Treasurer....WILLIAM SEAL.

Secretary....JOHN REYNOLDS.

Acting Committee—James Brian, John Jones, William Seal, and Edward Gilpin.

With desires that no discouragement may improperly deter you from prosecuting with energy such measures as may tend to rouse the friends of emancipation to renewed exertion in this righteous cause, and fully believing that a blessing will finally attend the labour, we are your friends.

Signed by order of the Abolition Society of Delaware.

ISAAC DIXON, President.

Attest, JOHN REYNOLDS, Sect'y.

Wilmington, 1st mo. 4th, 1816.

Adjourned until 7 o'clock this evening.

Evening, 7 o'clock.

Pursuant to adjournment, convention met:

Present—James Milnor, President; Thomas P. Cope, Benjamin Tucker, Joseph R. Jenks, Roberts Vaux, Joseph M. Paul, John Reynolds, Cyrus Newlin, Joseph Bringhurst, Evan Lewis, Reuben Leggett, Thomas Tucker, and Isaac M. Ely.

The committee of arrangement, to whom the communications from the several societies were referred for consideration, submitted the following report, together with the resolutions thereto annexed.

The Committee of Arrangement having deliberately considered the several interesting communications which were referred to them, Report:

That in their opinion, the American Convention of Delegates have assembled at a period, and under circumstances, peculiarly auspicious and important.

Auspicious, because it would seem that the conflicting passions, which have spread over the nations of the earth all the awful calamities of war, have by the interposition of Divine goodness and mercy, been in great measure allayed, and in the place thereof, dispositions favourable to the inculcation of the most benign principles have been manifested. Among these evidences of justice and right, is witnessed on the part of those kingdoms and states in Europe, who long and deeply participated in the high offending against injured Africa, a desire to atone for the crimes which they have committed, by an united determination effectually in future, to abolish the slave trade.

Auspicious, because it is believed that in our own country, where the slavery of the human species is still extensively tolerated, there are proofs of honourable and sincere desires, even amongst those who possess their fellow being in bondage, to meliorate their condition, and, if possible, by some means to purify themselves from an offence which violates the great obligations of christianity.

and insults the principles of our free and happy system of national government.

Important, because under all these favourable circumstances, it is of great consequence that the convention should duly appreciate the effect which may be produced by its judicious interposition; to encourage, within the sphere of its influence, the spirit of reflection which appears to have been awakened in the minds of those whom prejudice and ignorance may have heretofore lulled into security and unsafe repose—to call upon the legislators of the nation to keep pace with the progress of the light which may be shed upon the public mind, in relation to the great object of gradual and final emancipation, by the enactment of laws which may ultimately produce an event so desirable.

Your committee observe with the most unaffected pleasure that the Societies of New York, Delaware, and Pennsylvania, have, since their former reports, renewedly directed their attention to the subject of education. This indispensable object of care exercised toward our emancipated brethren of Africa, cannot but produce the most substantial benefits.

Whilst, however, your committee recognize the efforts which have been thus employed to improve the condition of the objects of our sympathy and regard, it is lamentably true, that there is great cause for regret, that, owing to the increased price of people of colour in some of the southern states, there are found individuals base enough to lend their time and services to invade the soil of those states where freedom has decreed, and maintains by the sanction of law, "*that all men are born equally free,*" and convey from these asylums of liberty, citizens, who merely because they are descendants of Africa, are supposed to be fit subjects

of unconditional servitude and unpitying oppression. The cruel practice of kidnapping has much increased; and your committee conceive, that it is impossible effectually to prevent it by state legislation: they would therefore recommend, that so much of the eighth section of the law of the United States, passed on the second of March 1807, as admits of the conveyance of negroes in vessels, which may transport such persons on the rivers and bays of the United States, be recommended to the attention of Congress by memorial—soliciting some amendment therein, so as to prohibit the facility which is now given to kidnappers by the provision of the section alluded to.

In order more fully to bring the subjects of this report before the notice of the convention, your committee propose the following resolutions for adoption:

Resolved, That a committee of convention be appointed to prepare a memorial to the Congress of the United States; in general terms soliciting its attention to the subject of domestic slavery, and especially requesting an amendment in the eighth section of the law passed on the second of March 1807, more completely restricting the transportation of negroes, from one state to another.

Resolved, That in order to distribute information respecting the views and labours of the friends of abolition in those parts of the United States where such information is deficient, it is expedient to print Clarkson's History of the Slave Trade, in a cheap form, for gratuitous distribution; and that the same be done under the direction of the acting committee, and at the expense of the convention.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to prepare an address to the Abolition Societies of the United States; encouraging them to continued and

determined efforts in the great and good cause they have undertaken, and especially recommending it to them to persevere in the all important subject of the scholastic and moral instruction of the people of colour.

All which is respectfully submitted.

ROBERTS VAUX,
EVAN LEWIS,
THOMAS TUCKER.

On motion, The Convention proceeded to the consideration of the resolution attached to the report of the committee of arrangement.

The first resolution being under consideration, it was agreed to refer it to Roberts Vaux, Thomas P. Cope and Isaac M. Ely.

The second resolution was referred to Joseph Bringhurst, Benjamin Tucker and Reuben Leggett to consider and report thereon.

The third resolution was adopted, and the following members appointed the committee pursuant to its provisions: viz. John Reynolds, Joseph Bringhurst, and Isaac M. Ely.

The following extract of a letter addressed to a member of this convention was read; the subject being of a nature extremely interesting to the feelings of every member of the convention, it was agreed to refer the subject matter of the extract to a committee to consider and report whether any steps can be taken in furtherance of the views of the benevolent testator: when Joseph Bringhurst, Benjamin Tucker, and Reuben Leggett were appointed.

Extract of a letter from Dr. John Adams to Thomas P. Cope.

"Richmond Hill, 19th Dec. 1815.

"A certain Samuel Guest in his early life, was resident in this state and acquired a considerable fortune in slaves and lands. He has died in or about the city of London, and has by his will directed that his slaves shall be emancipated and his lands sold for their benefit.

"By the laws of this commonwealth the slaves cannot be made free unless they shall be removed from our limits. I have advised the executors of Mr. Guest that with your aid Captain Cuffy might be made instrumental in advancing this work of philanthropy, or that the manumitting society (of which I understand you to be a member) might contribute to the much desired object. The number of negroes is about three hundred, of all ages, sexes, and conditions as to character. The amount which will be produced by the sale of land cannot be accurately ascertained, but it is expected that enough will be produced to pay the passage of each to Guinea, and to provide for them when arrived there for at least one year."

On motion resolved, That a committee be appointed to consider at what time and place the meetings of the next convention shall be held. Isaac M. Ely, Joseph R. Jenks, and Evan Lewis were appointed.

Resolved, That when this meeting adjourns, it do adjourn to meet to-morrow evening at 7 o'clock, at Clarkson School-house, Cherry-street.

Adjourned.

Clarkson School-house, Jan. 11, 1816.

Convention met pursuant to adjournment.

Present—James Milnor, President; Thomas P. Cope, Joseph M. Paul, Joseph R. Jenks, Joseph

Bringhurst, John Reynolds, Cyrus Newlin, Roberts Vaux, Thomas Tucker, Isaac M. Ely, Reuben Leggett, Evan Lewis, Benjamin Tucker.

The committee to whom was referred the first resolution reported by the committee of arrangement, submitted the written opinion of William Lewis, Esq. one of the counsellors of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, in relation to the subject referred to in that resolution, which was read and ordered to lie on the table.

The committee appointed to examine and settle the treasurer's account summitted the following report which was read and adopted.

American Convention for the Abolition of Slavery, in account current with Thomas P. Cope, Treasurer.

DR.

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--------|----------|
| Jan. 16, 1812. | | |
| To balance due me, | | \$ 37 28 |
| Jan. 10, 1816. | | |
| Cash paid for one share of stock | | |
| Philadelphia Bank, | 104 | 00 |
| Balance | 65 | 28 |
| | | |
| | \$ 206 | 50 |
| | | |

CR.

| | | |
|---|--------|----------|
| Jan. 1, 1814. | | |
| By sundry dividends received on Bank | | |
| stock to this date, | \$ 129 | 50 |
| Jan. 11, 1816. | | |
| Ditto received on Bank stock to this date | 77 | 00 |
| | | |
| | \$ 206 | 50 |
| | | |
| Balance due American Convention, | | \$ 65 28 |
| Errors excepted. | | |

THOS. P. COPE, Treas.

Philad. Jan. 11th 1816.

To the Convention, &c.

The committee appointed to examine the Treasurer's account, Report:

That they have attended to their duty and find that the treasurer Thomas P. Cope has received since last meeting of the convention in 1812, in dividends, from the Philadelphia Bank 206 dolls. 50 cents, and has paid 104 dolls. for another share of stock in said bank. The convention therefore is now in possession of eight shares of Philadelphia Bank stock, value at par 100 dolls. each, and 65 dolls. 20 cents balance remaining in the Treasurer's hands, as per account herewith submitted.

EVAN LEWIS,
REUBEN LEGGETT, } Committee.
JOSEPH M. PAUL.

Philad. 1mo. 11, 1816.

Several letters addressed to the Pennsylvania Abolition Society were read, from individuals residing in the southern and south-western States, who are desirous to emancipate their slaves, but are prevented by the existing laws of their respective states; these communications exciting renewed feelings of interest in relation to the peculiarly trying situation of the slaves as well as their owners, it was agreed to refer them to the committee to whom was referred the extract of a letter addressed to a member of this convention for their consideration.

The minutes of the acting committee were read.

On motion, The convention proceeded to the consideration of the opinion of Wm. Lewis, Esq. which was again read, and after some time spent in discussing the subject, it was agreed to refer it to the same committee who reported it, to which committee the president was added.

The committee to whom was referred the "second resolution," made report, which was read and referred to the committee on the address.

The following report of the committee to whom were referred the several extracts of letters on the subject of emancipation was read; the convention agreed to adopt the report, and refer it to the committee on the memorial to congress for their attention.

The committee to whom was referred the extract of a letter from Richmond &c. have felt themselves embarrassed by the various difficulties which encompass the subject. It does not appear to the committee that the convention can, at present, propose any specific plan for the accomplishment of the benevolent intention of Samuel Guest. But feeling the importance of the subject, and being impressed with the weight of the responsibility which the advocates of the rights of persons of colour have assumed, we are desirous that we should not permit ourselves to be discouraged by the magnitude of the task, from any reasonable efforts for the advancement of our cause. Your committee therefore propose that a memorial be drafted, representing to the Congress of the United States the simple facts which appeared before us, and respectfully soliciting their consideration of the subject, and that in their wisdom they may devise some remedy for the evil.

The committee appointed to consider on the time and place of holding the next meeting of the convention submitted their report, which was read, and the further consideration of it postponed.

On motion made and seconded, The convention proceeded to the appointment of an acting committee for the ensuing three years, when the following persons were appointed: to wit, Thomas P. Cope, Roberts Vaux, Joseph M. Paul, Benjamin Tucker,

and James Milnor, from Pennsylvania—Reuben Leggett, from New-York—Joseph Bringhurst, from Delaware.

Resolved, That when the convention adjourns, it do adjourn to meet at 10 o'clock to-morrow morning at the Select Council chamber. Adjourned.

SELECT COUNCIL CHAMBER.

January 12, 1816.

Convention met pursuant to adjournment.

Present—James Milnor, Cyrus Newlin, Joseph Bringhurst, John Reynolds, Evan Lewis, Isaac M. Ely, Reuben Leggett, Thomas Tucker, Thomas P. Cope, Benjamin Tucker, Joseph M. Paul, Roberts Vaux.

The committee appointed for the purpose, reported an essay of a memorial to Congress, which was read, attentively considered, and adopted, viz.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled:

The Memorial of the American Convention for promoting the abolition of Slavery, &c.

Respectfully sheweth,

That being convened for temperate consultation on the interests of that unhappy class of their fellow beings involved in the thraldom of slavery, several subjects have been presented to their consideration, which they have deemed of sufficient importance to submit very respectfully to your attention.

Your memorialists have reason to believe, that the provisions of the acts prohibiting the importation of slaves are evaded by unprincipled in-

dividuals, who in defiance of the benevolent measures of Congress, smuggle into the southern part of the United States, native Africans, and sell them into irredeemable bondage; and that instances still occur of vessels owned and manned by citizens of the United States, being engaged in the shameful traffic in human beings, which the united endeavours of most of the civilized nations of the earth, seem associated to abolish.

Your memorialists presume, with great deference, to solicit the attention of Congress to this interesting subject, with a hope that on a revision of the law referred to, its provisions may be strengthened, especially by an enhancement of the penalties on offenders against a prohibition, which policy, no less than humanity, requires to be carried into full effect.

Your memorialists have been much affected also by the many instances which constantly occur of kidnapping free people of colour in the northern states, and selling them into slavery in the southern: how far this can be directly met by any law to be passed by the legislature of the union, they will not presume to say; most certainly the laws of the individual States do not reach it, as the completion of the offence at once puts the offender out of every fear of the appointed punishment; an arrest not being admissible beyond the limits of the state from which the individual is stolen. But it also frequently happens, that under colour of the provisions of the existing law, providing for the recovery of runaway slaves by their owners, false pretences, surreptitious evidence, insidious artifice, and open violence are used in cases where no legal claim exists. As these acts are manifest abuses of the provisions of the law of Congress, your memorialists submit with much respect, whether, with-

out in any manner weakening the means of legal claimants in the recovery of their slaves, Congress might not inflict such penalties against offenders of the description now referred to, as would prevent the evils complained of, and increase the facilities, by removing prejudices against those who have fair and legal claims.

To one other remaining topic your memorialists invite the attention of Congress. Whatever restrictions the policy of particular states may impose on the emancipation of slaves, which as a subject not under the control of Congress, your memorialists have no design to bring into view, they deem it their duty to state, that inasmuch as no legislative enactment can stop the progress of individual sentiment, and its issuing by one means or another in corresponding acts, so experience has shewn that the gradual amelioration of feeling in the slaveholding states, towards the people of colour is constantly evincing itself in the liberation of their persons from bondage by individual owners; and your memorialists have been made acquainted with several very affecting instances of the existence of such a humane design, where the difficulty of finding an asylum for the persons proposed to be emancipated, has hitherto prevented its execution.

Your memorialists respectfully request Congress to consider how far it may comport with the interests of humanity, and public policy, to set apart a portion of the wide extended territory owned by the United States, for the colonization of legally emancipated blacks, or to adopt some other measure calculated, as well to prevent the injury of the mixture of too large a proportion of such persons amongst the white people of our country, as to provide, under a suitable government, for the civilization, improvement and happiness of them, and their posterity; a measure which would redound no less

to the honour than to the security and welfare of the community.

Signed by order and on behalf of the Convention.

JAMES MILNOR, President.

Attest, JOHN BACON, Sect'y.

Philadelphia, Feb. 1, 1816.

The report of the committee on considering the time and place of holding the future meetings of the convention was taken up, and on motion the report was postponed.

Resolved, That a committee of three members be appointed to consider the propriety of altering the constitutional period for the meeting of the convention. Cyrus Newlin, Joseph M. Paul, and Reuben Leggett were appointed.

The committee appointed to prepare an address to the abolition societies of the United States, reported an essay which was read and ordered to lie on the table.

The convention having reason to believe that many people of colour remain in bondage from difficulties in the minds of their owners as to their future disposition, and from the laws of many of the states prohibiting their residence therein after receiving their liberty—Therefore

Resolved, That the acting committee be instructed to open a correspondence with the African Institution, and with individuals friendly to the cause of emancipation in England or elsewhere, on the interesting subject of providing some asylum for emancipated people of colour.

Adjourned to half past 6 o'clock P. M.

Pursuant to adjournment the convention again met.

Present.—James Milnor, Joseph Bringhurst, Cyrus Newlin, John Reynolds, Evan Lewis, Isaac M. Ely, Reuben Leggett, Thomas Tucker, T. P. Cope, Benjamin Tucker, Joseph M. Paul, and Roberts Vaux.

The following report of the committee appointed to consider of the propriety of altering the time of meetings of the convention, was read and unanimously adopted.

To the Convention, &c.

The committee named to consider the propriety of altering the time of holding the stated meetings of the convention, Report:

That the subject has engaged their attention, and they unite in proposing, that the constitution be so amended as that the stated meetings in future be held on the first Third-day of the Eighth month (August)—and that the next meeting take place in the year 1817, instead of the First month (January) 1818.

CYRUS NEWLIN,
REUBEN LEGGETT,
JOSEPH M. PAUL.

Philad. 4 Mo. 12, 1816.

On motion, The report of the committee appointed to prepare an address to the several abolition societies, was taken up, and the essay of an address was read by paragraphs, and with some amendments adopted as follows:

CIRCULAR.

To the Abolition and Manumission Societies in the United States.

The return of peace to our country has enabled the American Convention for promoting the abolition of Slavery, after a year's postponement of its regular session, to resume its labours in the cause of humanity, and again to communicate with the societies it represents, on the great interests committed to its charge.

We feel, and it is with sensible pleasure we record the conviction, that the convention never met under auspices so favourable for "*liberating the captive, and setting the prisoner free,*" as those which the Christian world at present exhibits. The rights of suffering humanity, steadfastly maintained by a few individuals in the old world, amidst the horrors of a protracted war, and the turmoils of political revolutions, against obloquy and reproach; the force of confirmed habit, and the hard-heartedness of avarice, have finally succeeded in recommending themselves to the protection of governments and the moral sense of nations. We consider the African slave trade, so far as it can be affected by public and international law, as nearly at an end; and in looking forward to the period of its termination, we recognise with peculiar satisfaction the pledge which our own government has given in the treaty of Ghent, that the influence of our republic, as a member of the great Christian commonwealth, shall be exerted, to confirm throughout the world, the entire extinction of this abominable traffic.

Under such sanctions, the convention feel themselves authorized, not only by their own convictions of right, and the sentiments of the wise and

good in other countries, but also by the progressive and prevailing force of public opinion in our own, to urge with additional emphasis the necessity of a prompt attention to any violations of the laws prohibiting our citizens from engaging in the slave trade : and they confidently hope the energy manifested by the societies in this respect, with the aid of the public authorities, will soon wipe from our land the stigma of lending countenance to a practice equally abhorrent to reason and religion.

In adverting to the duties, which at the present crisis, are more particularly obvious, we would enjoin the necessity of watching with vigilance, and reporting to the proper tribunals, all attempts that may be made to inveigle or steal away people of colour for the purposes of transportation and sale. The convention know that the evil exists, and they are strongly impressed with the belief that it exists to an alarming extent. The almost certain exclusion of foreign importations has given a strong impulse to domestic cupidity, which is constantly engaged in kidnapping the free blacks of the northern and middle sections of the union, and transporting them to supply the waste of life occasioned by the toils and hardships of more southern climates. From this state of things, it will readily appear, that the efforts and cooperation of the societies are still necessary, to suppress a practice so alien to our state laws, and so outrageous to humanity ; and from the energy which has characterized the past, we are confident the societies will leave no cause for future regrets.

In contemplating the improvements of the condition of the African race, we are happy to find in the communications from New-York, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, that the efforts made to impart to them the benefits of knowledge, have been crowned

with very great success. This intelligence gives us the more pleasure, because we are persuaded, that the only means of accomplishing the final and complete emancipation of this unfortunate people, throughout our country, is, the extention to them, of the benefits of moral and intellectual cultivation. That their redemption from the thraldom in which they now are, should be preceded, or accompanied by such aids as will qualify them to discharge their relative, social and religious duties; and that these aids, will not, probably, for some time to come, be furnished, except by the efforts of the societies, or the generosity of individuals. We, therefore, recommend with earnestness, that the schools already established, may continue to be patronised; so that the scholastic and moral education of the pupils, may fit them not only to become valuable members of society among ourselves, but that they may be prepared to lead their brethren in the paths of knowledge; and if the legislature should so resolve, become at some future time in this country or in Africa, the germs of a colonial establishment, where our numerous slave population, under the protection of equal laws, guided by the lights of science, and controlled by the influence of religion, might forget the long history of their wrongs, in their gratitude for emancipation.

We would further recommend to the societies, the charge of a subject of pressing importance and immediate interest, which the convention from the shortness of its session, has been unable satisfactorily to dispose of. Several applications have been laid before the convention from individuals in the southern states, where the manumission of slaves is prohibited by law, requesting to be informed in what manner their wishes to free them can be accomplished; and what agency the societies will

take in furthering their benevolent intentions. The extracts accompanying this address, will present the different cases for the deliberation of the societies, who will take such measures concerning them as their wisdom and sympathy may direct.

With a view, however, to obtain if possible some adequate legislative provision, to meet cases of this description, we have by memorial, recommended the subject to the attention of Congress, and hope that in its wisdom some asylum may be designated for those, who are detained in bondage by the laws, in opposition to the humane wishes of their possessors. We have also directed a correspondence to be opened with the African Institution, and individuals friendly to emancipation in England and elsewhere, on the same subject, the result of which will in due time be communicated to the societies. We have also in our memorials to Congress urged the necessity of imposing further and heavier penalties for breaches of the laws against the importation of slaves, and requested the interposition of such constitutional powers, as they may possess, to prevent a continuance of the practice of kidnapping, and the abuses very frequently committed under the laws providing for the apprehension of runaway slaves. And to the end, that any future applications which it shall be expedient to make to Congress on this subject may be reinforced by a full exposition of the evil to be remedied, the societies are requested to collect the particulars of all cases of kidnapping, or abuses of the above mentioned law, which may occur within their respective limits, or come to their knowledge, and transmit the same by their delegates to the next convention.

The convention are persuaded that much of the hostility to gradual emancipation, which prevails in the south, results from ignorance among many

of the slave holders, of the true character of slavery, and of the considerations which prove its impolicy as well as its injustice. Until this obstacle is removed, the work of emancipation cannot succeed; for the march of philanthropy cannot be safe or certain except with the light of truth, and in the path of knowledge.

To subserve this end we have had it in contemplation to publish Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade in a condensed form; but finding our funds inadequate to the purpose, we have instructed the acting committee to use their endeavours to effect the object by means of voluntary contributions, and we beg leave to add to this measure, a recommendation, that the societies should cause to be published from time to time in the public newspapers, such tracts and essays, as will have a tendency to disabuse the minds of slave holders and others on this important subject, and prepare them to approve of a gradual emancipation.

In conclusion, the convention cannot but express its regret, that a larger number of the societies have not been represented at our present meeting; and still more, that several of them, which bore active parts in the early struggles of philanthropy on this great question, should have sunk into apathy, scarcely even retaining the formality of a name. We would remind them, that the triumph of freedom for the blacks, is not accomplished while the means of enjoying it are beyond their reach: that the field for usefulness is not narrowed:—that education can alone give permanency to the conquests of benevolence; and that as they were once unshaken by reproach, and persevered until the popular odium was over, they ought not now that the prospect brightens around us, to abandon the advan-

tages which it has cost them the labour and the patience of years to acquire.

Philad. Jan. 12, 1816.

The convention believing that considerable benefit might arise from the publication of Thomas Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade in a condensed form, but their funds not being adequate to the object,

Resolved, That the acting committee be directed to use their endeavours for causing to be prepared and published an abridgment of said work, by private subscriptions and contributions, or in such other way as they may find practicable for the purpose of sale or gratuitous circulation where it may be useful.

On motion, Resolved, That Thomas Tucker of New-York, and Evan Lewis of Delaware be added to the acting committee.

Resolved, That three members of the acting committee constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Resolved that the acting committee be instructed to publish such number of copies of the minutes of the convention, and of the address to the several abolition societies as they may deem proper; and that they transmit them to the several societies in the usual proportions.

Resolved, That the acting committee be requested to present the thanks of the convention to the Select Council for the use of their chamber.

Resolved, That the acting committee give three months notice of the meeting of the next convention to the several abolition societies in the United States. Adjourned sine die.

Attest, JOHN BACON, Sect'y.

OF THE

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIFTEENTH
AMERICAN CONVENTION
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY,
AND IMPROVING
THE CONDITION OF THE AFRICAN RACE,**

ASSEMBLED AT PHILADELPHIA,

**ON THE FIFTH DAY OF AUGUST, 1817, AND CONTINUED BY ABSENCE-
MENTS UNTIL THE EIGHTH OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.**

**PHILADELPHIA,
PRINTED FOR THE CONVENTION.**

Merritt, Printer, 74 south Second-street.

|||||

1817.

MINUTES
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIFTEENTH
AMERICAN CONVENTION
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, &c.

Philadelphia, August 5th, 1817.

THE Constitution, as amended, having appointed this day for the meeting of the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, delegates from the societies in New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland assembled in the Select Council Chamber, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

RICHARD PETERS, Jun. Esq.

Was appointed President pro. tem. and

ABRAHAM L. PENNOCK, Secretary pro. tem.

From credentials produced, it appeared that the following persons have been appointed as delegates from their respective societies to this convention, viz.

New York. Joseph Curtis, Walter Sawyer, Thomas Tucker, Reuben Leggett, Joshua Underhill.

Delaware. John Reynolds, Joseph Bringhurst, Evan Lewis, Jacob Alricks, William Gibbons, Edward Worrell, Samuel Hillis, William Wickes.

Pennsylvania. Richard Peters, jun. Benjamin Tucker, Joseph Lea, Joseph M. Paul, Joseph Parrish, Abraham L. Pennock, Thomas Shipley, Thomas P. Cope, Edward Needles.

Easton, Maryland. James Neall, William W. Moore,
Of whom were present—

From New York.

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Joseph Curtis, | Thomas Tucker, |
| Walter Sawyer, | Joshua Underhill. |

From Delaware.

| | |
|-------------|----------------|
| Evan Lewis, | Jacob Alricks. |
|-------------|----------------|

From Pennsylvania.

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Joseph Parrish, | Joseph M. Paul, |
| Abraham L. Pennock, | Thomas Shipley, |
| Richard Peters, jun. | Roberts Vaux, |
| Benjamin Tucker, | Edward Needles. |
| Joseph Lea, | |

From Maryland.

James Neall.

On motion, Resolved, that the Convention now proceed to the appointment of officers—whereupon the following persons were elected:

PRESIDENT.

RICHARD PETERS, JUN.

SECRETARY.

WALTER SAWYER.

TREASURER.

JOSEPH LEA.

The following communications from the New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland Societies, were read and referred, with their accompanying documents, to a Committee of Arrangement, who are instructed to report thereon, and also to suggest to a future meeting, such other subjects for the consideration of this Convention as they may deem proper to claim its attention.

Richard Peters, jun. Joseph Curtis, Evan Lewis and James Neall, were appointed to compose said committee.

To the "American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African race," to be convened at Philadelphia on the 5th day of the 8th month, (August) 1817.

"THE New York Society, for promoting the manumission of slaves, and protecting such of them as have been, or may be, liberated," in conformity with the usage of the different institutions represented in the Convention, avails itself of your approaching meeting, to reciprocate with them, through you, in assurances of co-operation and regard.

The proceedings of the Convention of January, 1816, were regularly communicated to our society, and were received with that interest, which the successive and gradually progressing, though hard earned, achievements of philanthropy are calculated to inspire. The reviving animation of the other societies imparted to us additional confidence; gave new zeal to our efforts; brighter prospects to our hopes; and urged us to attempt the accomplishment of that great work, which has redeemed the character of New York, and sealed, to the blacks, the charter of their freedom.

In the course of the last Autumn, several members who, from age and bodily infirmity, had been long excused from the active duties of the society, renewed their attendance, and urged to another effort, for the consummation of a leading object of their thirty years labour in the cause of humanity. Their countenance and wishes strengthened the sen-

timent already awakened in the society. An appeal to the citizens of the state, on the subject of final emancipation, was resolved on. It was followed up by an application to the Legislature, and has resulted in the passage of a law, which, besides meliorating the general character of servitude amongst us, has prescribed the year 1827, as the limit to slavery in this state.

Since the last meeting of the Convention, the activity of the society, through the medium of its committees and of individual members, has been unceasing, in watching all violations of the laws regulating the sales or transfers of slaves and servants, and in preventing their illegal transportation from the state; and we are happy to say, that, ungracious and unpopular as our interference may be, with some portions of the community, we have endeavoured so to combine discretion and candour, with vigilance and firmness, as to secure the patronage of public sentiment, and the prompt and speedy aid of the magistrates. We still need such patronage and aid. Attempts at kidnapping continue to be made here, as well as at the South. A jury, in one of our courts, has, within a few weeks past, found a verdict of "guilty" against one who was engaged in this foul business; and two others, charged with the same offence, now await their trial. We hope the sister societies will be indefatigable in their exertions to enforce the laws against this species of inhuman robbery, and that no culprit will hereafter be permitted to escape their penalty. Since the last communication from this society to the Convention, one hundred and thirty-eight persons, who were illegally held in bondage here, have been set at liberty through the instrumentality of this society.

Notwithstanding the feelings of mankind in general seem alive to an abhorrence of the slave trade, the society has learnt, with deep regret, not only from the public prints, but from private information, which there is too much reason to believe is correct, that this trade to the West Indies, has since the last peace, been carried on to a very great extent. Almost every arrival from that quarter brings intelligence of

cargoes of human beings being landed on those shores, and consigned to perpetual slavery. The society has information, which induces it firmly to believe, that this traffic is conducted by American citizens, under foreign flags. This violation of humanity, and of the laws of our country, can only be prevented by the interposition of Congress; and the society takes the liberty of strongly recommending to the Convention to adopt measures, which may induce the national government to interfere their authority on this subject.

Our school, a particular account of which was given in our former communication, continues to flourish. At present it contains three hundred and eight scholars of both sexes, and promises to increase in interest as well as usefulness, notwithstanding the novelty of the institution has passed away.

A list of our officers for the current year is as follows:

CADWALLADER D. COLDEN, President,
VALENTINE SEAMAN, 1st Vice President,
GEORGE NEWBOLD, 2d Vice President,
JEREMIAH THOMPSON, Secretary,
ROBERT WHITE, Assistant Secretary,
JOHN MURRAY, Jr. Treasurer,
ROBERT C. CORNELL, Register.

JOSEPH CURTIS, Chairman, } Of the Standing
ROBERT WHITE, Secretary, } Committee.

JNO. MURRAY, JR. Chairman, } Of the Trustees
ISAAC COLLINS, Secretary, } of the School.

THOMAS EDDY, Chairman, } Of the Committee of
J. M. ELY, Secretary, } Correspondence.

WILLET SEAMAN, Chairman, } Of the Committee of
REUBEN LEGGETT, Secretary, } Ways and Means.

C. D. COLDEN,
 P. A. JAY,
 WM. SLOSSON,
 BENJ. CLARK,
 J. M. ELY,
 T. A. EMMETT,
 WM. SAMPSON,
 WM. JOHNSON.

}

Counsellors.

The following persons are appointed our Delegates to the approaching Convention.

JOSEPH CURTIS,
 WALTER SAWYER,
 THOMAS TUCKER,
 REUBEN LEGGETT, AND
 JOSHUA UNDERHILL.

Referring for further particulars to our Delegates, who will enter with cheerfulness into such measures as may conduce to the general good, we conclude, by renewing to the Convention our congratulations, on the important points that have been gained; and on the increased regard which the subject of emancipation seems to have secured throughout our country. Humanity is, we hope, about having her tears wiped away by the hand of public justice; while education is preparing to grace her march, and religion to consolidate and confirm her triumphs.

Signed in behalf of the society in New York, the 28th of 7th month, (July) 1817.

CADWALLADER D. COLDEN, President.

JAREMIAN THOMPSON, Secretary.

*To the African Contention for promoting the Abolition of
Slavery, &c.*

Your last Address was read in this society, and we have reason to suppose had an enlivening influence on the minds of those especially engaged in the cause of the oppressed African. It is however a subject of great regret, that this number is very small. Many of our aged brethren have retired from the contest, and with our benevolent fellow citizens an apathy prevails; the more to be lamented, as we fear it is the result of a mistaken impression that the work is nearly accomplished; we are nevertheless cheered with the hope that among the rising generation, not only within the bounds of this society, but throughout the union, a band is forming whose exertions, under the blessing of Divine Providence will not cease, until slavery is obliterated from the land of their nativity, and enlightened freedom permanently secured to the descendants of Africa.

Agreeably to your request we subjoin a list of those peculiar cases which have claimed the attention of our acting committee. By reference to this list taken from their minutes, it will appear that the number of cases wherein they have been concerned is fifty-three; in about thirty of these cases, the committee were successful by rescuing the objects of their care from slavery, and thirteen persons were given up by legal authority to the claimants, or dismissed by the committee for want of proof. It is to be lamented that the number of the latter should be so considerable, especially as there is reason to fear that many have returned to slavery on account of the difficulty of procuring the necessary documents and testimony to substantiate their freedom. Many cases yet remain under care, in some of which suits are depending and a favourable result sanguinely anticipated. Among other cases which have claimed the attention of the committee, we may observe several have occurred in which people of colour brought into this country, contrary to the laws of the United States prohibiting the slave trade, have been rescued

from the degrading condition to which they had been illegally reduced and restored to the enjoyment of freedom. A very important decision has recently been made by the supreme court, by which the freedom of children born in Pennsylvania is completely established, although the mother may have been a runaway slave.

Notwithstanding the numerous and increasing demands on the attention of our acting committee, we have reason to believe, its exertions will continue unabated; they have certainly had a tendency to thwart the designs of those avaricious and unprincipled marauders, who have extensively combined for the purpose of enslaving their fellow beings, and we hope a persevering attention on their part, aided by that of our fellow labourers in other sections of the union, will finally, not only overthrow that combination, but create in the minds of our feeling fellow citizens, such a sense of the iniquity of slavery, as will eventually produce its entire abolition. We are unwilling to close these remarks without acknowledging the prompt and efficient assistance, which has been afforded by many advocates for the rights of humanity in the southern states, where we have had occasion to open a correspondence on behalf of the objects of our care.

The education of children of African descent continues to be an object of attention, and the schools under our care appear to promise beneficial results. They have been attended during the past year by an average number of seventy-two boys and forty-five girls; and the conduct and improvement of the children has been such as to give us great encouragement to persevere in our exertions to afford them instruction. We are well convinced that on their proper education must rest our hope of seeing them attain that estimation which they ought to hold in society.

In addition to the standing committees heretofore in our service, another has been appointed, denominated the Apprenticing Committee, whose duty it is to encourage the people of colour to bind their children to suitable trades and occupations, and to assist them in procuring such situations as

would be likely to be advantageous. Although the labours of this committee have not been rewarded with all the success which we had anticipated, yet there is reason to expect the appointment will prove beneficial, as it will have a tendency to excite the attention of parents to the importance of the object.

The great deficiency in the laws of the United States on the subject of slavery, which have become manifest in the course of the proceedings of our Acting Committee, have induced us once more to apply to Congress by memorial for an amendment therein. A copy of the memorial is forwarded herewith, by reference to which, those particular cases of deficiency in the laws which claimed our attention will be apparent. Although received with respect by Congress and referred with other memorials on this subject to committees in both Houses, we regret to say, that no law was passed at the last session to afford the desired relief; we rely however on the prevalence of that sense of justice which resides in the heart of man, when unprejudiced by avarice, for the accomplishment at a succeeding session of the necessary and just improvements.

A new edition of the constitution and by-laws of this society having been deemed expedient, a committee has been appointed to attend to the printing thereof; and with the intention of combining extracts from such laws of other states or legal decisions on important points as may be useful, the assistance of members of Convention from other states in forwarding this work is desired and will be advantageous.

We have appointed Richard Peters, jr. Thos. P. Cope, Benj. Tucker, Joseph Lea, Joseph M. Paul, Joseph Parrish, Abraham L. Pennock, Thos. Shipley, Roberts Vaux and Edward Needles to represent us in this Convention and annex a list of our officers for the current year.

Signed by order and on behalf of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

JOSEPH M. PAUL, Vice President.

Attest, **BENJAMIN WILLIAMS, Secretary.**

Philadelphia, 6th mo. 30th, 1817.

*List of officers of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting
the Abolition of Slavery, &c. for the year 1817.*

PRESIDENT.

CASPAR WISTAR, M. D.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

THOMAS PARKER,
JOSEPH M. PAUL.

TREASURER.

THOMAS PHIPPS.

SECRETARIES.

BENJAMIN WILLIAMS,
ABRM. L. PENNOCK.

Counsellors. Wm. Lewis, Wm. Rawle, John Hallowell,
John Sergeant, Wm. L. Delany, Richard Peters, jr. Abraham
Chapman, (Bucks,) John Ross, (North,) Chas. Smith,
(Lancaster,) George Fisher, (Dauphin.)

Electing Committee. Wm. Wayne, jr. Wm. Bryant,
B. Cresson, G. Gaw, D. J. Davis, Jos. Parker, A. Shaw,
W. Folwell, jr. P. Price, jr. E. Needles, H. Troth, B. C.
Parvin.

Board of Education. Joseph Lea, Wm. Wayne, jr.
J. Hinchman, B. Albertson, B. Cresson, A. Shaw, L. Nicholson,
P. Price, jr. Thos. Phipps, H. Troth, Wm. Folwell, jr. Samuel Webb, Jos. M. Paul.

Apprenticing Committee. Joseph Lea, Thomas Shipley,
William Master, B. Tucker, T. Owen, jr. T. Phipps, W.
Wayne, jr. A. Shaw, A. L. Pennock, D. J. Davis, W. Folwell, jr. L. Nicholson.

Committee of Correspondence. Timothy Paxson, Thomas P. Cope, Jonathan Fell, Roberts Vaux, Jonah Thompson, Joseph Lea, Benj. Williams.



To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African race.

THE practice of kidnapping free negroes has become so frequent in these parts, that it appeared necessary to form an association for their protection, and some humane minds feeling a lively interest for that unfortunate class of the human family, have formed an association denominated, "The Philanthropic Society of Easton" for the protection of those born free, unlawfully sold for transportation, or held in bondage, as well as those entitled to their freedom at a given time or upon a contingency, who are so often cruelly torn from the bosom of their families, by avarice and the iron hand of tyranny.

The frequent occurrence of these enormities has induced us to use our utmost exertions by petitioning the Legislature of this state for a revision of her laws relating to that people. In the autumn of the last year we prepared petitions, and distributed through the several counties of this shore, to agents selected by us, for the purpose of obtaining the signatures of as many of the friends of humanity and civil liberty, as was practicable in their several neighbourhoods. On their return to us we were gratified in observing a long list of the most respectable characters of each county joined with us in our prayer; yet the prevalence of feelings in one branch of our Legislature (long cherished) adverse to the civil rights of that unfortunate class of society, have as yet prevented us from obtaining the law prayed for. Though foiled in our first endeavours, we feel a hope, from the numerous calls upon the humane, that the minds of the members of our next Legislature will be induced to reflect on and consequently to

see the necessity of enacting such laws as shall more effectually secure the rights of this oppressed people, and bring their persecutors to condign punishment. Reasoning thus, we are induced to hope that on this shore the rights of this people are more clearly seen than formerly.

The condition and situation of those who are slaves amongst us, heretofore kept in great ignorance, is considerably meliorated, and their treatment marked with more humanity than in times past, and it is now no longer creditable, but considered disgraceful for a man to treat his slaves cruelly.

As the philanthropic mind in tracing the subject through all its parts, has cause to rejoice, seeing that the work is (though slowly) moving on the wheel, governed by that irresistible Providence, (though unseen or unfelt by many) its revolution will be steady in bringing about that great epoch, when the desert shall blossom as the rose, and all men shall know that there is a God that judgeth in the earth.

The infancy of our association will preclude us from adding much to the general stock of information, yet from a desire to gain all the useful information in our power, we have been induced thus to address you, and officially announce the establishment of this society, and we hope our feeble effort will enable us to draw from your enlightened body, much matter worthy of our consideration and improvement. Seeing as we do the great necessity of using every effort legally within our power to loose the bands of the oppressed, we hope that every member of the societies represented in your Convention, will use his utmost endeavour with all diligence to promote the cause of the oppressed descendants of Africa.

Signed on behalf and by direction of the Philanthropic Society of Easton, the twenty-fifth day of the Seventh Month, Anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and seventeen.

ROBERT MOORE, President.

LAMBERT CLAYLAND, Secretary.

On motion, Joshua Underhill, Joseph M. Paul, Jacob Alricks and James Neal were appointed to examine and settle the Treasurer's account.

Adjourned to 4 o'clock, P. M.

Four o'clock, P. M. Convention met, pursuant to adjournment. Delegates present as in the morning, with the addition of Joseph Bringhurst from Delaware, and William W. Moore from Maryland.

A communication from the "Society for the Relief of People of Colour" in Kent county, Delaware, was read, stating the appointment of Joseph G. Rowland, Warner Mifflin and Henry M. Godwin as its Delegates to this Convention, of whom Joseph G. Rowland and Henry M. Godwin now attended.

The following communication from the Abolition Society of Delaware was read, with the documents therein mentioned, and referred to the committee of arrangement.

To the "American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery."

A copy of the minutes of your proceedings and your circular address for 1816 were received. It appears that the spirit in which the Convention was established continues to animate with an honourable zeal the advocates of the oppressed Africans. We hope that no circumstances, however flattering, may be permitted to lull you into a lukewarm temper, no opposition however bold and threatening may impede your generous and noble labours. The band of worthies who maintained the contest against tyranny in the season of darkness and injustice, supported the standard of truth and humanity at the expense of great personal toil, and often op-

posed their enemies at the peril of their lives. They have passed away with a crown of honour and we hope their mantles have fallen upon their successors. In some districts where those great and good men, and others of a later day have laboured with unwearied diligence for the benefit of the Africans, we now behold with surprize and regret many of their descendants folding their arms in a state of indifference, or guzing around with complacency, as if this great work of philanthropy were accomplished. Much has been effected, but more remains yet to be done. Although the fetters of personal slavery be broken and the captive set at liberty, yet if his mind be confined in the bonds of ignorance, he is not half a freeman, and the work of emancipation remains unfinished. When reason and religion have so far prevailed over the selfishness of our nature as to bring the people to a sense of moral rectitude, and induce legislatures to break the chains which bind the person of the slave, it then becomes the duty of the christian to open the prison door of the mind and pour the light of knowledge on the darkened understanding.

If some of our desires have been attained, some of our views realized, we ought not too easily to slide into self-congratulation. Let it be deeply impressed on our minds that we owe the descendants of Africa a debt of immense magnitude. We are bound by the laws of equity, by the solemn requisitions of justice to pay that debt. Can we discharge our obligations in any way so effectually as by communicating to the children of those (from the sweat of whose brows we have derived many of our external comforts) a portion of that knowledge which has been the source of our enjoyments and our power? The Africans who were dragged from their homes, and brought in floating dungeons to our shores, wore out the vigour of their lives to acquire wealth for our fathers. To us have descended the fruits of their toil, and we are their debtors. In places where our exertion for the liberation or personal preservation of the African is no longer necessary, we may discharge a portion of our debt by opening

the book of knowledge, and extending to their minds the blessings of education.

With views of this kind, in the year 1810, many of the individuals composing this society, associated with others under the name of "*the African School Society.*" To obtain an official account of the progress and present condition of that institution, we lately requested a communication from them. We shall send you a copy of their report. The society and their tutor, a man of colour, have manifested a degree of attention to their duties well worthy of imitation.

The societies of New York and Philadelphia, have manifested a liberality in furnishing the people of colour, with the means of instruction within their respective districts, equally honourable to the hearts and understandings of those concerned. We hope while their labours are duly appreciated by the subjects of their benevolence, the fruit is visible in the moral and intellectual improvement of the black people. Let other cities and towns follow their example, and endeavour to prepare the African descendants for the duties of civil society.

The state of Delaware forming a boundary line between the free and slave states, is made the scene of much illicit trade and frequent transgression of the rights of people of colour. Men whom avarice has changed into demons, either purchase blacks who owe a few years of service, or kidnap those who are free, and bring them into this state to meet by appointment the traders of the south. Thus situated, great watchfulness, much loss of time, and heavy expenses are the lot of those who advocate the rights of the black people. Although many of our citizens are more friendly to our views than they were a few years ago, yet the burthen rests on a few, and the contributors of pecuniary aid are very limited in number. We cannot afford either money or time to develope and prosecute to a successful issue, the numerous cases of cruelty and oppression which occur within our limits. But we entertain a hope that some severe examples of punishment for kidnapping, which have lately taken place,

may lessen the number of piratical violators of the liberties of their fellow men. William Palmer, John and Lewis Jamesson and Savary Toy, have all suffered the penalty of the law at New Castle for their illegal traffic and cruelty to the blacks.

Others however, equally guilty, are roving at large in the spirit of wickedness, untouched by the hand of justice, because we have not the pecuniary means to defray the expenses of their prosecution.

In compliance with the request of your circular letter, we shall furnish you with some statements of cases of kidnapping and other illegal conduct.

One of the senators in congress, from this state, introduced to the senate of the United States, two bills for the more perfect protection of the people of colour in their legal rights. Our society communicated to him several well authenticated facts to show the necessity of such protection, but in defiance of the just claims of the sufferers, the bills were lost. We presented to our last state legislature petitions for alterations in our laws, to render them more favourable to the blacks. A bill of that character passed the house of representatives, but in the senate, the measure did not succeed.

Last winter we received letters from Claiborne Clifton, a lawyer of South Carolina, informing us that he had several blacks under his care who had been illegally sold to slave traders and liberated by him through process of law. He desired information respecting David Pennock, who was kidnapped from Philadelphia—we obtained the necessary documents, and Clifton procured his freedom.

That benevolent man after rescuing those persons from bondage, became anxious for their safe conveyance to places of security. He wrote to us on the subject. We learnt that Henry Godwin, of Camden, Delaware, was willing to become their protector, if he could obtain means for the payment of their expenses. The society near Dover and Camden, raised about forty dollars; John Cook of Philadel-

phia procured two hundred dollars, and the society of Delaware furnished one hundred and fifty. With less than four hundred dollars, during the coldest weather of our last winter, Henry Godwin travelled to Columbia, South Carolina, and received from C. Clifton four liberated blacks, all of whom he protected and conveyed to Philadelphia. The conduct of Claiborne Clifton, and Henry Godwin, is marked with uncommon zeal and benevolence, and is worthy the particular notice of the Convention.

We meet with so many hopeless cases of distress, so many embarrassments, and find so few to unite in bearing the toils and expense of the concern, that we are almost ready to abandon the work in despair. But there are moments when we are animated with hope, and strengthened with confidence, that divine aid will be afforded for our support, and the arm of power stretched forth for the protection of those who are groaning under oppression.

WM. WICKES, President.

The following are the officers of this society.

| | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| WILLIAM WICKES, | President. | Acting Committee. |
| WILLIAM POOLE, | Vice do. | |
| EDWARD WORRELL, | | |
| Wm. SEAL, Treasurer. | JONATHAN LAMBORN, | |
| ISAAC JACKSON, Secretary. | ZIBA FERRIS, | |
| | JAMES BRIAN. | |

Signed by order of the Abolition Society of Delaware,
Seventh Month 25th, 1817.

ISAAC JACKSON, Sec'y.

The minutes of the acting Committee of this convention were read, with the following summary report of their proceedings, which was accepted.

*To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition
of Slavery, &c.*

The acting committee report a summary of their proceedings as follows.

An edition of Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, abridged by Evan Lewis, has been published—750 copies have been subscribed and paid for, by the Manumission society of New York—and 635 copies by the Pennsylvania society for promoting the abolition of slavery, and persons resident in Philadelphia. Considerable progress has been made in distributing the work within the southern states, as detailed in our minutes—3 or 400 copies of this interesting work remain in the hands of the publisher, exclusive of the foregoing 1385—which may be had at the original subscription price. A letter has been written to Thomas Clarkson, a member of the African Institution, agreeably to the direction of the late Convention.

By information received from Joseph Bloomfield, Esqr. it appears that the New Jersey abolition society, is considered as being dissolved.

The president of the Kentucky abolition society, states that a deputation will not attend the Convention the present sitting—but that at a future meeting, they contemplate sending a representation.

On behalf of the Committee,

JOSEPH M. PAUL.

Philadelphia, Eighth Month, (Aug.) 5, 1817.



The committee of arrangement presented a report which was read, and recommitted to them for further consideration.

Two letters addressed to a member of the acting committee, by David Barrow, president of the "Kentucky abolition society," together with the minutes of a meeting of that society, held in October 1816, were read, and being interesting to the Convention, were referred to the committee of arrangement.

On motion, Resolved, that when this Convention adjourn, it do adjourn to meet to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

Adjourned.

August 6th, 1817.

At ten o'clock, A. M. convention met. Present,

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Richard Peters, jun. | Edward Needles, |
| Joshua Underhill, | Joseph Parrish, |
| Joseph Curtis, | Evan Lewis, |
| Thomas Tucker, | Jacob Alricks, |
| Joseph M. Paul, | Joseph Bringhurst, |
| Roberts Vaux, | James Neall, |
| Thomas Shipley, | William W. Moore, |
| Abraham L. Pennock, | Joseph G. Rowland, |
| Benjamin Tucker, | Henry M. Godwin, |
| Joseph Lea, | Walter Sawyer. |

The Convention having proceeded in the discussion of several important subjects, none of which resulted in any resolution—adjourned to 9 o'clock to-morrow morning.

August 7th 1817.

Nine o'clock, A. M. Pursuant to adjournment, the Convention again met, Present,

Richard Peters, jr.
 Joseph Curtis,
 Joshua Underhill,
 Thomas Tucker,
 Joseph M. Paul,
 Thomas Shipley,
 Abraham L. Pennock,
 Benjamin Tucker,
 Joseph Len,

Edward Needles,
 Evan Lewis,
 Jacob Alricks,
 Joseph Bringhurst,
 James Neall,
 William W. Moore,
 Joseph G. Howland,
 Walter Sawyer,

The committee of arrangement reported as follows :—

*To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition
 of Slavery.*

The committee of arrangement, to whom the communications for the several societies established for promoting the abolition of slavery, were referred ; and to whose consideration the subjects, to which the attention of the Convention may be directed, have been submitted : Respectfully report.

The committee, in common with every member of the Convention, have derived the highest satisfaction from the progress towards the emancipation of people of colour, which has been made in the state of New York, since the last meeting of the Convention. The enactment of a law in that extensive and popular commonwealth, by which a period has been determinately fixed and established, after which negro slavery has ceased within its limits, is an event, at which every friend of humanity must rejoice. In this important and just concession in favour of rights so long invaded and denied ; and in the many labours of that association, known to us from other sources, as well as by its communications to the present convention, are seen the laudable and strenuous

efforts in the cause of abolition of the New York Society, for promoting the manumission of slaves, and protecting such of them as have been or may be liberated.

The organization of a society at Easton, in the state of Maryland, and the representation of that association and of the society for the relief of the people of colour, in Kent county, Delaware, by delegates at this Convention, are sources of peculiar gratification to the committee.

From the exertions of "the Philanthropic society of Easton," and of the society in Kent county, Delaware, much may be expected. They will contribute to the dissemination of truths, the influence of which will be irresistible; and the fostering care of these institutions will be extended to those of the African race, who, although freed from bondage, suffer from the influence of their former servitude, and who are exposed to the arts of those who would again reduce them to their former bondage.

The letters, received from the president of the abolition society of the state of Kentucky, by a member of the acting committee of the Convention, which, with the papers accompanying them, have been under the consideration of the committee, furnish proofs of zeal and activity in the cause of the emancipation of the people of colour, highly honourable to the president and members of the Kentucky society, and pleasing to the committee. The absence of delegates from that society to the Convention, is sensibly felt by the committee.

The attention of the committee, has been particularly drawn to the propriety of increasing the number of societies for furthering the progress of abolition in the United States; by the distinguished success which has attended the exertions of the New York societies; by the well founded anticipations of benefits to the cause, which the formation of the Easton Philanthropic society has authorised; and, by the advantages which have resulted from the labours of the Kentucky and other societies. As a measure of first impor-

tance, the committee therefore respectfully recommend the adoption of means, to promote and obtain an increase of societies for the abolition of slavery.

The committee, with deep regret, perceive from the communications submitted to them, the extent, frequency and success of efforts, in many of the states of the union, to carry into bondage persons of colour who are free, and who are entitled to all the rights and enjoyments of liberty. While the high price paid for persons of this description in the southern states, holds out such rich allurements to avarice and crime, practices of this kind will continue, unless the strong arm of legislation in the different states, and of the United States, shall be exerted to aid and protect the victims of these lawless violence, and to punish with increased severity these offenders against every institution, both human and divine. The provisions of the laws of several of the states, are altogether insufficient for the prevention of offences against them, and they should be supplied with new and increased punishments. The artifice and cunning of those, who are engaged in this barbarous traffic, enabled them to escape in many instances, the grasp of the law; and schemes for the accomplishment of their purposes, are now in frequent and secure use, which were not contemplated when the laws now in force were adopted.

The committee therefore, respectfully submit, that it would be proper to entrust to some of the members of the Convention, the collection of all the provisions of the laws of the several states, and of the United States relating to kidnapping people of colour, with instructions to lay the same before the Convention. To the same committee may also, with great propriety, be confided the duty to ascertain and report to the Convention the provisions of the laws of the United States relating to the interference and agency of citizens of the United States in the slave trade, now carried on out of their territories and jurisdiction. That some of our citizens, are engaged in this nefarious and wicked pursuit, is

well known; and that the prohibitions of our law for their punishment are inadequate, is justly apprehended.

When the Convention, shall be in possession of the information on these subjects which the committee to be appointed will be enabled to furnish; they may take the practice of kidnapping, and the agency of our citizens in the foreign slave trade into consideration, and adopt such measures in relation to them as may be deemed proper and necessary.

The committee recommend, that the acting committee be directed to open a correspondence with Claiborne Clifton, Esq. of Columbia, South Carolina, and that they present to him and to Henry Godwin, the thanks of this Convention for their noble exertions in the cause of the oppressed people of colour.

It has been the usual course adopted by such Conventions as this, which is now holden, to communicate to the societies by whose delegates they have been formed, such views of the interests under their charge, as may promote the success of the common design. Your committee respectfully submit that at no period, with more propriety than at the present, could such an address be made. The great work is progressing; the cause of oppressed Africans strengthens daily; and the attention and talents of many of our most distinguished citizens in sections of our country, over which prejudice and darkness have heretofore prevailed in relation to it, are directed to its prosperity and protection.

The committee therefore, recommend the appointment of a committee to prepare an address to the different societies for promoting the abolition of slavery in the United States.

All which is respectfully submitted.

RICHARD PETERS, jr. Chairman of the committee.

On motion, the following committees were appointed, agreeably to the suggestions of the committee of arrangement, viz :

On the subject of promoting an increase of abolition societies in the United States,

Thomas Tucker, Henry M. Godwin,
 Joseph Bringhurst, William W. Moore.
 Abraham L. Pennock,

To ascertain the provisions of the laws of the United States and of the several states, relative to kidnapping and the provisions of the laws of the United States, prohibiting the interference and agency of our citizens in the slave trade, out of the territories and jurisdiction of the United States,

Richard Peters, junr. Joseph Curtis.
 Joseph M. Paul,

'To prepare an address to the different societies, for the promotion of the abolition of slavery in the United States,

Evan Lewis, William W. Moore,
 Joseph Curtis, Joseph G. Rowland.
 Joseph Lea,

On motion, the acting committee were instructed to open a correspondence with Claiborne Clifton, Esqr. and present to him and to Henry M. Godwin the thanks of this Convention, agreeably to the recommendation of the committee of arrangement. Adjourned to half past three this afternoon.

Half past three o'clock, P. M.

Pursuant to adjournment, the Convention again met. Present the delegates as in the morning.

The subject of colonizing the free people of colour in the United States, claimed the attention of the Convention, and after much interesting discussion,

On motion, resolved, that a committee of seven be appointed to consider the subject of the colonization of the free people of colour, and to report what further steps it may be proper for the Convention to take in relation thereto:—and Richard Peters, junr. Joseph Bringhurst, Walter Sawyer, Evan Lewis, Dr. Joseph Parrish, Thomas Shipley, and Joseph M. Paul were appointed.

The committee on the subject of promoting an increase of abolition societies in the United States, made the following report which was read and accepted.



To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

The committee to whom was referred the consideration of such measures as they may deem necessary to promote the increase of abolition societies in the United States, report it as their opinion that the subject should be recommended to the particular attention of the societies which are now established, through the medium of the circular address, directed to be prepared and forwarded to them. And further, that the acting committee of this Convention be instructed to use their best exertions for the promotion of that valuable object in such places as they may deem necessary.

Connected with these views, the committee believe it important that the proceedings of this Convention be more extensively circulated than has heretofore been usual.

By order of the committee,

THOMAS TUCKER, Chairman.

The committee to ascertain the provisions of the laws of the United States, relative to kidnapping, &c. offered the following report, which was accepted and the resolutions annexed thereto were adopted.

*To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition
of Slavery.*

The committee to whose consideration the laws of the several states, relative to kidnapping, and the laws of the United States relative to the interference of the citizens of the United States in the slave trade. Report,

That they have examined the laws relative to the said subject, and lay the same before the Convention, and they recommend the adoption of the following resolutions.

On behalf of the Committee,

R. PETERS, junr.

Resolved, that the Convention consider the provisions of the laws of the United States, and of the several states relative to kidnapping people of colour, defective and insufficient for the prevention of the injuries done to those who are the victims of this wicked and unjustifiable practice.

Resolved, that the Convention consider the provisions of the laws of the United States, relative to the interference and agency of citizens of the United States in the slave trade, now carried on out of the limits and jurisdiction of the United States, defective and insufficient to prevent those violations of the principles of humanity, and of the intentions of the national legislature.

Resolved, that the acting committee of the Convention, be instructed to take under their particular charge, the means of procuring such alterations of the laws of the United States, and of the several states, relative to kidnapping, and of the laws of the United States, relative to the slave trade, as may be necessary and proper; and that for the accomplishment of these objects, they have power to appoint and procure an agent, whose expenses shall be paid out of the funds of the Convention, to repair to Washington at the next session of congress, who shall promote the success of a petition to be presented to that body in the name of the Con-

vention, and that the committee communicate to the several abolition societies of the several states, the provisions of the different laws relative to the practice of kidnapping, which have been reported to the Convention, and recommend that a petition be presented to the legislature of the state in which each society is established, praying for the enactment of a law more effectually to remedy the defects now existing in the present provisions.

On motion, resolved, that a committee be appointed to take into consideration the propriety of raising funds for the purpose of affording aid to such abolition societies as may require pecuniary assistance. Joseph Curtis, Thomas Shipley, and Edward Needles were appointed. Adjourned to 10 o'clock to-morrow morning.

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August 8th, 1817.

At ten o'clock, A. M. Convention again met. Present,

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Richard Peters, junr. | Joseph Parrish, |
| Joshua Underhill, | Roberts Vaux, |
| Joseph Curtis, | Evan Lewis, |
| Thomas Tucker, | Jacob Alricks, |
| Joseph M. Paul, | Joseph Bringhurst, |
| Thomas Shipley, | James Neall, |
| Benjamin Tucker, | William W. Moore, |
| Edward Needles, | Joseph G. Rowland, |
| Abraham L. Pennock | Henry M. Godwin, |
| Joseph Lea, | Walter Sawyer. |

The committee on the subject of colonization offered the following report and resolution, which after deliberate discussion, were approved and adopted, viz :

*To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition
of Slavery.*

Your committee to whom was entrusted the duty of considering the subject of colonization, and proposing such further measures as may be proper for the adoption of this Convention, report :

'That the Convention having at its last session had under its consideration, the subject of colonizing the emancipated people of colour, and a petition having been presented to the congress of the United States, and a correspondence commenced by the acting committee, with Thomas Clarkson in relation to this object, the committee regard the Convention as bound to notice this interesting concern at the present session.

They have perceived the complexity of the subject and felt the magnitude of the task which you have placed upon them ; they have endeavoured anxiously, and with candour to examine the subject in all its bearings, and although they are sensible of the responsibility, they will not shrink from that expression of sentiments, which by your appointment has become their duty.

The present is a very extraordinary and eventful moment —many of the advocates of humanity, of the protectors of persons of colour, and of the holders of slaves, appear to have united their views, and concentrated their powers for the attainment of one great object—an object of imposing aspect and pregnant with the most important consequences to the future welfare of our coloured population. Some project for colonization appears to occupy the minds of a great multitude of our fellow citizens, but as yet, opinions are various and unsettled. There is, however, one society organized, whose declared purpose at present, is the colonizing of the free people of colour on the coast of Africa. In that society, there is united a large portion of talent and virtue ; but while they admire the mental power, and contemplate with affectionate pleasure the dignified and benevolent intentions

of its members, they must express their unqualified wish, that no plan of colonization will receive the support of persons whose characters have extended so widely the sphere of their influence, or shall be permitted to go into effect, without an immutable pledge from the slave holding states of a just and wise system of gradual emancipation.

They deem it unnecessary to enter at large on the reasoning which this proposition forces on their understandings, and therefore close their report by offering the following resolution.

Resolved, as the sense of this convention, and explanatory of its views of this interesting subject, that the gradual and total emancipation of all persons of colour, and their literary and moral education, should precede their colonization.

On behalf of the Committee,

RICHARD PETERS, Jr. Chairman.

Adjourned to 4 o'clock this afternoon.

Four o'clock, P. M.

Convention met. Present the delegates as in the morning, with the exception of Roberts Vaux.

The committee to examine and settle the treasurer's accounts, submitted the following statement and report, which were agreed to, and Thomas P. Cope was desired to pay the balance, and transfer the stock to the present treasurer of the Convention.

The American Convention for the Abolition of the Slave trade in account with Thomas P. Cope, Treasurer.

| Dr. | Cr. |
|---|----------|
| 1816 By balance due at last settlement | \$ 65 28 |
| Jan. 13 March dividend on 8 shares stock, Ph. Bk. | 32 00 |
| 1817 Sept. do. 8 do. do. | 24 00 |
| May 3 Dividend last 6 mo. 8 do. do. | 28 00 |

Amount due the American Convention, &c. \$ 145 28

THOMAS P. COPE, Treasurer.

*To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition
of Slavery, &c.*

The committee appointed to settle the Treasurer's account, report,

That they have performed the duty assigned to them. The balance in the hands of the treasurer this day is \$149 28 cents, as per the above statement. In addition to the above sum the Convention hold eight shares of Philadelphia bank stock, which at par are worth 800 dollars.

Respectfully submitted, Eighth Month, 1817.

JOSHUA UNDERHILL,
JOSEPH M. PAUL.
JACOB ALRICKS,
JAMES NEALL.

On motion, resolved that the acting committee be instructed to purchase one hundred copies of Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade abridged, and to distribute the same in the states of Kentucky and Tennessee, and that they be authorized to draw on the treasurer for the amount of the cost thereof.

The following letter was received from Roberts Vaux, together with the books therein mentioned; when on motion, resolved, that the president be requested to present the thanks of this Convention to Roberts Vaux, Esqr. for his donation of six copies of "Memoirs of the life of Anthony Benezet."

*To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition
of Slavery, &c..*

With this note are transmitted, six copies of Memoirs of the life of Anthony Benezet. It is my wish that the delegates from each society, may accept one of them, to be deposited in the library of the respective associations, and that a copy be retained among the books and papers of the Convention.

I have only to regret that this little volume, so imperfectly displays the unexampled labours and benevolence of one of the most illustrious and humble philanthropists, that perhaps ever adorned our country.

ROBERTS VAUX.

Birwood Lodge, Eighth Month, 6, 1817.

The following resolution of the Pennsylvania abolition society, was read, and on motion directed to be entered on the minutes of this Convention.

At a stated meeting of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, held Sixth Month, 26th, 1817.

On motion, resolved, that the sum of sixty dollars be, and the same is hereby appropriated towards defraying the expenses of the ensuing session of the "American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c."

From the minutes.

B. WILLIAMS, Secretary.

To the American Convention.

The committee to take into consideration the propriety of raising funds for the aid of such abolition societies as may need assistance, offered the following report and resolution, which were adopted.

To the American Convention for promoling the Abolition of Slavery.

The committee to whom was referred the resolution to take into consideration the propriety of raising funds for the purpose of affording aid to such abolition societies as may require pecuniary assistance.

Report, that they have taken the subject into consideration, and agree in sentiment, that as the funds of the Convention, which according to the constitution are intended for this

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purpose, are inadequate thereto, at this time, they respectfully submit the following resolution.

Resolved, that the acting committee be instructed to apply to the different societies, and such persons as they may think proper, to promote contributions for the purpose of increasing the funds of the Convention, in order that such societies as need pecuniary aid, may have that assistance which their peculiar situation may require, and that the money so raised be placed in the hands of the treasurer, and subject to the order of the acting committee for the purpose above mentioned.

J. CURTIS, Chairman.

On motion, resolved, that the following persons compose the acting committee of this Convention until the next session, and that three of that committee constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, viz :

For New York.
Joshua Underhill.

For Pennsylvania.
Thomas Shipley, Joseph M. Paul,
Benjamin Tucker, Abraham L. Pennock,
Joseph Lea.

For Delaware.
Evan Lewis.

For Kent county (Delaware.)
Joseph G. Rowland.

For Easton (Maryland.)
William W. Moore.

The committee appointed to prepare an address to the several abolition societies in the United States, presented an

essay, which being read, was with some alterations adopted, as follows.

To the Abolition and Manumission Societies in the United States.

The American Convention for promoting the abolition of slavery, being again assembled to take into consideration the means for advancing the important object which the friends of this righteous cause have in view, the ultimate and entire abolition of slavery, deem it their duty to address the different societies associated for the purpose of furthering this desirable object.

We have learned with peculiar satisfaction, through the medium of the communications made to this Convention from the societies by whom it has been constituted, that the friends of abolition in different parts of the United States, still continue to be animated by an active, laudable and honourable zeal in the cause of oppressed humanity, and that much good has been effected by their exertions. In numerous instances, the shackles of the captive have been broken and the unhappy victim of cupidity and avarice, illegally held in bondage, has been set free.

The legislature of New York, by the timely exertions of the manumission society of that state, assisted by many benevolent individuals, have been induced, since the last meeting of the Convention, to fix a period for the final termination of slavery. When we see the labours of the friends of abolition prosper thus in their hands, and their laudable exertions crowned with ultimate success, it ought to animate and strengthen us in continuing to promote so good a cause, and to fix in us a determination, under the blessing of heaven to persevere unto the end. Much has already been done. Thirty-seven years ago, in all the states forming the American commonwealth, slavery was legalized. Now we can enumerate, nine states in which slavery is abolished, or does not exist; two of which are among the

largest, the most populous, and the most wealthy states in the union. But much remains yet to be done. Whilst there exist in our country more than ONE MILLION TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND SLAVES, shall we be lulled into fancied security because much has already been gained? because so many members of the human family have been rescued from the thralldom of this worst of moral and political evils, and have had realized to them the great truth, that all men are created equally free, and that no legislative enactments, no customs, or hereditary claims can alienate this birth-right of man? Let us be aroused to continual watchfulness; and whilst we are influenced by a becoming zeal in the cause of oppressed humanity, let us never depart from the original ground we have assumed, the ultimate and entire abolition of *slavery in our land*. This was the original and great purpose for which we associated, and it has hitherto been the light shining out, and directing us in all our exertions.

At no period were circumspection and vigilance more necessary than at the present. The prohibition of the slave trade from abroad, has given rise to a system of traffic in our fellow beings, as lawless, and as cruel, as that which formerly prevailed on the African coast. Kidnapping, which offers such temptations to avarice, has become a system, and it is notorious that the laws of the United States and of the several states, are altogether inadequate to its suppression or prevention. Whatever may be the activity, and however successful the industry of those who are hostile to these barbarous invasions of the rights of our fellow beings, in detecting such practices and arresting the guilty, so long as the laws are insufficient for the punishment of such offences, the perpetrators will continue in their work of wickedness. The Convention therefore recommend to the different societies, and request individuals to have presented as early as practicable, memorials to their respective state legislatures and to the general government; calling their attention to this important subject, in order that measures may be ta-

ken more effectually to check these unjustifiable and nefarious practices.

The formation of societies where they do not now exist, is also deemed a matter of primary importance to the advancement of the great cause we have in view. By their means may be disseminated more extensively, those principles and views which we maintain and avow, and the innocent victim of cruelty and avarice may be shielded from the hand of lawless violence.

The moral and religious instruction of the people of colour is also an important consideration with the friends of abolition. For it is to little purpose that the body is loosed from the fetters of slavery, if the mind remain shackled by ignorance and superstition. The man who is uninlightened, and thus disqualified for the enjoyment of rational liberty, is not half a freeman. The great debt we owe to this people, is not discharged when their freedom is procured. We are bound by the obligation of christianity, to impart to them the blessings of education, and that light and knowledge which we have received; by which means we shall enlarge the bounds of their usefulness, and of their happiness. The Convention therefore earnestly recommend to the different societies and to individuals interested in the cause, the formation and establishment of schools, for the instruction of coloured people, in their respective neighbourhoods. The success that has already attended such schools where they have been established, furnishes assurances that from this source may be anticipated the happiest results.

Signed on behalf, and by order of the Convention. Philadelphia, August 8th, 1817.

RICHARD PETERS, jr. President.
Attest, WALTER SAWYER, Secretary.

Resolved, that the acting committee be instructed to prepare the minutes of this Convention for publication, and to publish such number of copies thereof, and of the address,

to the several abolition societies as they may deem proper, and that they transmit them to the several societies in the usual proportions.

Resolved, that the acting committee be requested to present the thanks of the Convention to the select council, for the use of their chamber.

On motion, resolved, that the acting committee be instructed to have collected and bound ten copies of the minutes of the Convention from its commencement, and forward one copy to each abolition society in the United States.

Resolved, that the acting committee give at least three months notice of the next meeting of this Convention to the several abolition societies.

Resolved, that the constitution of the Convention be referred to the acting committee to suggest such alterations and amendments therein as they may think proper. Adjourned sine die.

W. SAWYER, Secretary.

ERRATA.

Page 12, line 15, for North read Northumberland.

Page 22, line 24, for Popular read Populons.

MINUTES
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF
THE FIFTEENTH
AMERICAN CONVENTION
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY,
AND IMPROVING
THE CONDITION OF THE AFRICAN RACE,
ASSEMBLED AT PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE TENTH DAY OF DECEMBER, 1818, AND CONTINUED
BY ADJOURNMENTS UNTIL THE FIFTEENTH OF
THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.

PHILADELPHIA,
PRINTED FOR THE CONVENTION,
BY HALL & ATKINSON, 53, MARKET-STREET.

1818.

CIRCULAR.

Philadelphia, November 7th, 1818.

SIR,

THE acting committee, of the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery and improving the condition of the African race, having communicated to me the resolution of two societies, requiring a call of the Convention, and I having concurred with those societies and with the committee in the propriety of the measure; I do in conformity with the provisions of the constitution of the Convention and in execution of the duties imposed on me as President of that body, call such a meeting at this city, on the 10th day of December, at 11 o'clock, in the Court room of the Circuit Court of the United States, at the south east corner of Sixth and Chesnut streets: I request you to make this known to the Society, over which you preside; and also that you communicate it to the Delegates to the Convention appointed by your society.

The present period is one of deep and increasing interest to those who have the happiness and welfare of the descendants of Africa at heart. The subject of colonization is important, and it has been considered by many, that it has become the duty of the friends of abolition to act in relation to it. The recent proceedings in some of the Southern states, by which persons who have been imported as slaves, in contravention of Laws of the United States, have been



sold into slavery, and the proceeds of this outrage against humanity, morality and justice received into the Treasury of the United States, has justly excited universal indignation. The wide and firm progress of opinion in favour of emancipation and abolition, among numbers of our most distinguished fellow citizens, and the benefits which may result from united efforts in their favour, while these sentiments prevail, demand attention. These are among the subjects which will claim the consideration of the Convention.

It is therefore earnestly and anxiously desired, that the meeting of the Convention be attended by every one of its members, and I solicit you to employ your personal influence to obtain this object.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

RICHARD PETERS, Jun.
President.

MINUTES
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF
THE FIFTEENTH
AMERICAN CONVENTION
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, &c.

Philadelphia, December 10th, 1818.

At a Special meeting of the Fifteenth American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, convened at Philadelphia, December 10th, 1818, the chair was taken by the President, and in the absence of the Secretary, Isaac M. Ely was appointed to that office.

By reference to the former minutes and credentials now produced, it appears that the following persons are members of this Convention.

From New York.

Peter A. Jay,
Isaac M. Ely,
Joshua Underhill,
Hugh M'Cormick,

Theodore Dwight,
Hiram Ketchum,
Nathan Comstock,

Pennsylvania.

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|---------------------|----------------------|
| William Rawle, | Joseph Parrish, |
| Abraham L. Pennock, | Richard Peters, Jun. |
| Benjamin Tucker, | Joseph Lea, |
| Joseph M. Paul, | Thomas Shipley, |
| Roberts Vaux, | Edward Needles. |

Columbia, (Penn.)

| | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| William Wright, | Stephen Boyer, |
| William J. Houston, | Samuel Dusfield, |
| Charles A. Morris, | Jesse P. Haines, |
| William Kirkpatrick, | James Hopkins, |
| Jonas Preston, | Joseph Mifflin. |

Delaware.

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Edward Worrell, | Jacob Alricks, |
| John Reynolds, | William Gibbons, |
| Evan Lewis, | Joseph Bringhurst, |
| Samuel Hilles. | |

Kent County, (Del.)

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Joseph G. Rowland, | Warner Mifflin, |
| Henry M. Godwin, | |

Easton, (Md.)

| | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| James Neall, | William W. Moore. |
|--------------|-------------------|

Of whom were present—

Peter A. Jay, Isaac M. Ely, Hugh M'Cormick, Hiram Ketchum, William Rawle, Abraham L. Pennock, Benjamin Tucker, Joseph M. Paul, Roberts Vaux, Joseph Parrish, Richard Peters, jr. Thomas Shipley, Edward Needles, William Wright, Jonas Preston, Joseph Mifflin, Edward Worrell, John Reynolds, Evan Lewis, Samuel Hilles, Joseph Bringhurst.

Communications were then read from the New-York, Pennsylvania, Columbia, Delaware and Easton, Societies, when on motion, Resolved, that said communications be referred to a committee of arrangement, with instructions to report thereon; and also to suggest such other subjects as they may deem proper to claim the attention of the Convention.

Abraham L. Pennock, Peter A. Jay, Hiram Ketchum, Evan Lewis, Jonas Preston, and Richard Peters, Jun. were appointed to compose said committee.

On motion, Resolved, that the acting committee cause the proceedings of the convention of this day with the address of the Societies, to be printed for the use of the Convention.

On motion, Resolved, that when the Convention adjourn, it adjourn to meet again at 10 o'clock to-morrow morning. Adjourned.



To the "American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African race," to be assembled at Philadelphia on the 10th of December, 1818.

The "New York Society for promoting the manumission of slaves, and protecting such of them as have been or may be liberated" have received the communication of the President of that body, notifying a call of the Convention at the time above mentioned. Before noticing particularly the objects, which will principally occupy the deliberations of the Convention, the Society, in consideration that their report will probably meet the public eye, would improve

this opportunity to remark upon some of those causes, which oppose themselves to the rapid dissemination of those blessings, which they are anxious to confer.

It is an undeniable fact that the condition of slaves in this country has within a few years become much meliorated; they are treated with more kindness and humanity by their masters than formerly; they enjoy not only by the laws of most of the states, but by a sort of common consent arising from the increased light which has been lately shed on the subject of slavery, more of the rights and privileges of men.—To those, who have been at all attentive to the subject, the cause of this improved condition of the yet wretched sons of Africa is obvious: but to those, who, while they profess joy that the slave is treated more like a human being than heretofore, it ought to be stated, that this improvement, which is the subject of their congratulations, may for the most part be traced to the active and unremitting exertions of the friends of Universal Emancipation.—Against opposition the most imposing, in the face of difficulties that would have deterred any other than resolute hearts, the friends of abolition have pursued their silent yet determined march; and it is an unspeakable consolation, that though they are yet at a sightless distance from the termination of their labours, flowers have already sprung up in their path; they have already heard the pæans of liberty sung by thousands of redeemed captives, and tens of thousands there are, who, though not yet completely emancipated, no more rise to curse the day that gave them birth.

But it is to be regretted that an argument is drawn from the very fact of the improved condition of slaves in this country, calculated in some measure to oppose further advancement in the cause of abolition. It is said that slaves are kindly treated; that

they have sufficient to eat, are well clad, and that they are contented in their situations; that if they were made free and compelled to support themselves, they would not be as well off in the particulars stated, and the friends of abolition are requested to compare the condition of slaves thus provided for, with that of some of those persons of colour who are free, but who are nevertheless among the most idle and dissolute to be found in society. The society are well aware that reasoning of this sort is almost universally resorted to by slave holders themselves, and they regret to find, that, in some instances, it has infected the minds of those, who are well disposed to emancipation; thereby either paralysing their exertions, or rendering them neutral in the controversy. It would be uncharitable to suppose that all, in whose mouths this reasoning is found, are insincere. No: the truth of the remark is very obvious in the present case, that men are more frequently incorrect in their opinions than in their feelings. To those, who are deeply interested in opposing the end which the friends of emancipation propose to their labours, it is hardly to be anticipated that what the society deem correct reasoning on this subject will be addressed with much effect; but to those, who are disposed to investigate the subject impartially, they would say, "come, let us reason together."

It is presumed now too late to deny that the minds of the African race are susceptible of as much improvement, of as noble motives of action, as the whites. If there be a lingering doubt on this subject in the mind of any man, the society would confidently refer him to the African free school of New York. Let him visit that school, and he will find within its walls, as many germs of greatness, as much longing and ardent desire after intellectual aggrandisement, as in any other of equal numbers, and of like organization in that city.

If then the descendants of Africa are in possession of human souls, susceptible of as much improvement as our own; although they may be in a measure contented, they cannot be happy in a state of slavery, unless ignorance be the parent of happiness. If contentment be happiness, then is the brute that perishes more happy than the human being; for, when he has browsed his fill, he is contented: and the human being, upon whom every art, that the imagination of his fellow beings could devise for a succession of ages, has been practised to graduate his mind to the level of brutal instinct, may be contented, when the cravings of his hunger are satisfied, and his body protected from the inclemency of the weather. But shall this be called happiness? Was the human soul, which is an emanation from the Deity, made to be thus degraded? What man of observation; what man, who has taken a retrospect of his fellow-men from the dawn of society to the present day; who is familiar with the long catalogue of crimes, and the vast amount of human misery, which have either been produced by ignorance, or could have been prevented by intelligence; will answer this question in the affirmative? No; it is a truth, that the human mind was given for cultivation: That happiness is alone derivable from its progress in the path of knowledge and virtue. Else why does the establishment of schools, and seminaries of learning, meet such general approbation? Why are these establishments regarded by all wise and good men as the proudest specimens of a nation's grandeur? Why the highly praiseworthy attempts to cultivate the minds of that interesting but long neglected class of the community, the deaf and dumb? Can any, who has beheld the sparkling eye, the animated countenance, of a deaf mute, when the passage was first opened to the introduc-

sion of knowledge to his mind, when he received the first correct ideas of nature, and of nature's God, withhold his assent to the proposition, that knowledge is the proper aliment for the human mind. If this be not so, why the mighty exertions in some countries of Christendom to send the light of intelligence to the darkest corners of the globe? Can it be possible, that the zeal which distinguishes the present age, the knowledge of which begets in the mind of the Christian and the Philanthropist the most exhilarating hopes; can it be possible, that all this zeal is only calculated to mingle the cup of bitterness for man? Certainly it is so, if ignorance be the parent of happiness. But it will doubtless be admitted, even by many slave-holders, that it is laudable to instruct the deaf and dumb; that it is Godlike to civilize and christianize the natives of America, the Indian, and the African, in his own country. But the African, within our borders, is an object of minor concern. When it is seen that in some portions of our country he is degraded almost to the level of the brute; when it may be seen that to cultivate his mind is practicable, he is still neglected; nay more, he is forbidden in some states of the union to receive that pittance of cultivation, which the hand of philanthropy would afford him in his degraded state: the light of knowledge is debarred his mind by solemn municipal provisions. The Society forbear to express the mingled feeling of indignation and regret, which arises in their bosoms at the recollection that such things are in a country so enlightened as our own; nor do they deem it their province to pronounce maledictions; but if there be an Almighty Governor, who delights in justice, and who will judge man according to his actions, they would not like to be the individuals, who aid, abet, or consent to, any regulations, which oppose the growth and expansion of the human mind. We do not hesitate

to declare to the world, that our object is not simply to meliorate the physical condition of the sons of Africa: we will never rest satisfied till every exertion in our power has been made to emancipate their minds. We long for the time, when the language may be addressed to every African, and inculcated in his mind; thou art an accountable being; thou wast born with a right equal to that of any other man to life, liberty, and enjoyment; thou art an heir of immortality. And as a most important step towards the accomplishment of this object, the Society require that the African shall be redeemed from slavery. Truly the advocates of slavery may be consistent, when they withhold knowledge from the mind of the African. If his body must be held in thraldom, the light of moral truth would discover to him the abjectness of his condition, and awake him to a sense of his numerous wrongs. This Society have ever been anxious therefore for the emancipation of the slave, that motives to improvement may be more successfully addressed to his mind; that he, and his children, may come in, and be participants in that philanthropy which characterises the present age, and which seeks to instruct and enlighten. We are by no means of the opinion that the execution of this design towards the African race will be unattended with difficulties. But it is not anticipated that any more difficulties will attend this undertaking than to enlighten and instruct any other people, to debase whom such pains have been taken. As ignorant human beings, they have claims upon our philanthropy; but as beings, who owe their wretchedness to us, justice demands that to us they should also owe their deliverance.

With these preliminary remarks the Society would now observe in relation to the objects for which this meeting is specially called, that they are manifestly

of much importance, and well worthy the serious attention of the American Convention. The recent sale of slaves in Georgia for the benefit of the United States has excited in this community an almost universal feeling of surprise at so shameful an outrage upon humanity and consistency on the part of the United States. The Society hope that there will be no exertions wanting on the part of the Convention, to procure a repeal of the law by which this sale was authorised.

The Society feel pleasure in stating to the Convention that the school under their charge still continues to flourish. The number now instructed in the school is about three hundred; and the applicants for admission for some time past have been more numerous than could be accommodated. From the latter circumstance the Society some time since determined to erect another school-house, as soon as sufficient funds could be collected to authorise the undertaking. An appeal was therefore made to the munificence of our members, and of our fellow citizens at large. This appeal was not made in vain: already have funds been collected to authorise a commencement of the building, and the Society have only been deterred from proceeding in the execution of their plan, by their not being able as yet to procure a situation so eligible as is desired.

Since the last Convention, the standing committee of the Society have manifested their usual diligence: through their exertions, sixty of the African race have been rescued from slavery, and there are now twenty undecided cases under their care. These numbers appear on the records of the committee; but besides these; as great a number owe their freedom to the private exertions of individual members, of which the Society have no record.

The Society would also inform the Convention, that since their last report, they have devised a plan extending their care to certain of the children, who have been instructed in their school, after they have left the school; in putting them out to some useful trade or employment. It has long been a subject of regret to the Society that the children educated at their school, have been suffered, after leaving it, to waste their time in idleness, thereby incurring those vicious habits, which were calculated to render their previous education worse than useless. To remedy this evil, the plan above mentioned was devised. A committee is appointed by the Society, called the Indenturing Committee, whose duty is to provide places for those children, who may have completed their education, either at a trade or some other employment. The committee will take especial care that the persons with whom the children may be placed, shall be those of good characters; and while on the one hand they shall insist that the children demean themselves with propriety, they will, on the other extend their guardian care to them, and provide that they shall not become the subjects of oppression or tyranny. This plan has been communicated to the parents and guardians of those children who are sent to the school, at a public meeting for that purpose; and as far as their opinion on the subject can be gathered, it was very favourably received. In the expression of their opinion, as to the situations to be preferred for those children, who may be indentured, the Society gave a decided preference, and strongly recommended agricultural pursuits. They are well persuaded that pursuits of that nature are far more conducive to the moral improvement of those under their charge, than the pursuits of the city, under the most favourable circumstances. The plan of which the general outline is above given, has not yet been put in complete operation, but it is one from which we anticipate the most salutary results.

Before closing this communication we would direct the attention of the Convention to another subject which we deem of much importance. It is well known that the inhabitants of South America have long been engaged in a bloody contest with the mother country for their independence. Whether they will ultimately succeed or not we hazard no prediction; but the Convention must be well acquainted with the fact, that the propriety of an acknowledgement of their independence on the part of the United States has been urged with much zeal in Congress; and it is probable that the subject will be called up again the present session. As the Slave Trade has been carried on to almost an unprecedented extent by the Colonies on the Spanish Main, this Society have determined to present a Memorial to the Congress of the United States, a copy of which Memorial is herewith sent you.

In all the discussions in Congress on the subject of South American independence, a provision for the welfare of the African race has never to our knowledge formed an item. It is therefore requested that the application on the part of this Society may be seconded by the zeal and influence of the Convention; and we do hope, that the Legislature of our Country, if they ever consent to acknowledge the independence of any or all of the Spanish colonies, will endeavour to obtain from them an abandonment of the Slave Trade.

Signed in behalf of the Society aforesaid,
CADWALLADER D. COLDEN,
 President:

New-York, November 27th, 1818.

Copy of the Memorial to Congress, referred to in the preceding Address.

The Memorial of the "New York Society for promoting the Manumission of Slaves, and protecting such of them as have been or may be liberated," respectfully sheweth,

That we, your Memorialists, have in common with the rest of our fellow citizens, observed with solicitude the course and progress of the revolution in South America; and have felt, as individuals, a strong desire, that genuine principles of civil liberty might prevail there, either under liberal and equitable recognitions from the European governments, with which the provinces of the southern hemisphere were connected, or in a state of entire separation and independence.

On the general character of the revolution; the causes which led to it; the means by which, or the objects for which, it has been maintained, or resisted; or on the policy which it may be expedient for this country to observe in the present crisis; we intentionally forbear expressing an opinion. We are satisfied that our public authorities, possessing full information on these subjects, are inclined to adopt such a course as will, on the one hand, shew the stedfastness of their attachment to the principles of free government; and on the other, that impartiality and moderation, which befits a great nation, desirous of maintaining peace with the world, and prouder of the conquests achieved by the example of her institutions and morals, than of the victories purchased by her sword.

There is one subject, however, on which the paramount laws of humanity give the government of the United States a right to insist, in determining upon the relations which shall hereafter be maintained between this Country and the South American Provinces. *It is the African Slave Trade.*

If the friendship of our Country; powerful in her influence and resources; equitable in her intercourse with foreign nations; elevated in her intellectual and moral character; and diffusive in her benevolence; is not worth the sacrifice of this abominable trade, we hope that the active exercise of this friendship may be withheld, wherever that sacrifice is refused.

We had indulged in the expectation, that amidst the light and benevolence of the nineteenth century, nations, by whom the horrors of this trade had been witnessed, and who were themselves struggling to be free, would have felt the necessity of recommending their condition to the moral sympathy of the world, by coupling with the resolves, which announced their own emancipation, a solemn pledge that this iron-hearted traffic should exist no longer. We regret to state, that thus far, this expectation, so justly formed, has, except in a single instance, been disappointed.

We did hope also, that Spain herself would have perceived the importance of yielding something in this respect to the known public opinion of this Country; especially as it was in

accordance with the avowed wishes of the greater part of Europe. But almost every arrival from the West Indies brings us intelligence that this work of plunder and of cruelty is going on in her hands with renovated ardour, insatiable avarice, and to an extent heretofore unparalleled. The gazettes of this very day, on which we resolve to transmit to your our memorial, announce the importation into Havanna on the 29th October, and the 1st November, of this year, in only six vessels, and all but one of inferior size to a ship, the number of seventeen hundred and thirty-two slaves.

The lands of North America were once crimsoned with this stain. But better times, and better principles have succeeded. She has done, and is doing, much, to atone for the past; and we believe she now has it in her power to repay in some sort the injuries she has formerly inflicted on Africa, by a timely and rigorous interference, which will be honourable to her character in the estimation of the world, and what is of more consequence to her, will be a noble and efficient tribute to the claims of suffering humanity.

We therefore respectfully request that this subject may be duly considered by your honourable body, and that some effective provisions respecting it, may be ordered to be strongly insisted upon, in any arrangements which may hereafter be definitely entered into between this Country and Spain, or the Provinces of South America.

CADWALLADER D. COLDEN, President.

*To the "American Convention for promoting
the Abolition of Slavery, to be assembled in
Philadelphia on the 10th of December, 1818.*

THE Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, are aware of the difficulties which, at this season, will attend an extraordinary meeting of delegates from the different societies represented in the Convention; yet they believe the occasion such as to have justified the call, and that the present is a period, when interchange of sentiment and union of action, among the advocates of humanity, are particularly desirable.

Among the objects which we conceive as most conspicuously requiring your attention, is the sale which has been made by the public authorities of the United States, or of individual states, of persons illegally imported as slaves into this country, and who notwithstanding the obvious purpose of the law, under which they were sequestered, have been doomed by a construction of that law, to hopeless and interminable slavery! A restoration to those injured fellow beings of their natural and unalienable rights, and an amendment or explanation of the law so as to prevent a repetition of such outrages upon national justice, ought to be obtained. Your exertions to accomplish these purposes, we trust will be prompt, and we hope will be effectual.

Another object and one of considerable magnitude is presented by the efforts now making for the establishment of a colony of free people of colour. The operations of a society established at the seat of government for accomplishing this design, are viewed with anxious interest by the legitimate friends of African emancipation, and we believe the period has arrived, when a serious investigation of the probable result of this measure, ought to be no longer avoided. We forbear all comment upon the subject, but we ask your solemn attention to the inquiry; whether such colonization will subserve the interests of humanity, or whether it will have the effect to perpetuate slavery in the United States? In connexion with this investigation, your deliberations will necessarily be directed to the plan lately suggested, of promoting emigration to the island of Hayti.

The Congress of the United States having exclusive legislation over the District of Columbia, such measures as may be necessary to effect the gradual Abolition of Slavery therein, must be obtained by an

act of the general government. The situation of the slave population in that section of our country, has engaged the deep consideration of this Society, and will probably merit a portion of your attention.

The Education of the coloured population of the United States, continues to be an object of much solicitude with the friends of Abolition, whose anxiety is increased, when they behold so large a portion of the community, deprived in a Christian country, of the great privilege of perusing the Scriptures of Truth. The full accomplishment of our desires on this point, we know, is not of easy attainment, but we are encouraged to look forward with the hope of more rapid advancement, from the facilities which would be afforded by the establishment of Schools on the Lancasterian plan.

Impressed with the importance of the foregoing subjects, we have deemed it proper specially to submit them to the view of the Convention. In the performance of the duties which await you, we wish your encouragement, believing, confidently, that under the Divine blessing, your labours of charity for the relief of the oppressed and injured African, will finally be crowned with success; and that He, who first broke down the boundary between Jew and Gentile, will point out to all who bear the Christian name, that a difference of colour is no cause for a suspension of the exercise of Philanthropy and Love.

Signed on behalf and by order of the Pennsylvania Society, &c. &c. &c.

W. RAWLE, President.

Philadelphia, November 19th, 1818.

*To the "American Convention for Promoting
the Abolition of Slavery," &c.*

Encouraged by your late Address to the several Abolition Societies in the United States, and by indications of good-will to the cause of justice and humanity in many of the inhabitants of these parts, proposals were offered to persons residing in this place, Lancaster, and York, for forming an Association for the protection of people of colour in their legal claims to liberty; and generally, as occasion might offer, to co-operate with Societies already formed, in promoting the total abolition of slavery in our land: these places being a thorough-fare between some of the states where slavery exists, and the eastern section of the Union, have often been scenes of attempts at kidnapping, and other aggressions on the rights of persons of colour. The result of the application was the institution of the "Columbia (Pennsylvania) Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and the relief of free negroes unlawfully held in bondage; and for the melioration of the condition of the African race." The Society was organised on the 21st of the 3d month (March) last, and will meet annually on the first Saturday in March: it consists at present of sixty-four members, most of whom reside in Columbia and York, with a few in Lancaster and its vicinity.

When we reflect upon the enormities which continue to be practised in many parts of our favoured country, on the ill-fated Africans and their descendants; the deeply concerted schemes by which is perpetuated a traffic which we reprobate in pagans and infidels; the strong allurements which the price of slaves in the southern states holds out to avarice; the difficulty of detection; the expense, inconvenience, and vexations attendant on prosecutions; the deficiency of the laws in many of the states; and the

apparent apathy of the general government with regard to this crying national sin,—much appears, to discourage the philanthropist. On the other hand, when we contemplate the character of the age in which we live, marked as it is with a concurrence (unexampled in history) of events of striking import in the physical, political, and religious worlds; the simultaneous exertions that are making in different sections of the globe for the melioration of the condition of man; the favourable changes which have been wrought within a few years, in the views and feelings of civilized men, on questions of vital import to general happiness and improvement; we cannot but recognise the footsteps of Deity in the mighty revolution; and under this view be encouraged to hope, that though thick darkness continues to shroud the minds of many; and the worst passions of the human heart may, in some places, be permitted for a while to belch forth their own shame, and, like the troubled sea, to cast up mire and dirt, the time is nevertheless approaching, when, through the blessings of Providence upon human exertions, justice and mercy shall become respected in the earth; and this much injured and long degraded race be raised to their proper grade in the scale of being.

We observe from the report of your Acting Committee, that an edition of Clarkson's history of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, abridged, has been published, and a number of copies purchased by the Convention for distribution in the states of Kentucky and Tennessee. From some circumstances recorded in that work, it appears, that the want of correct information is often among the causes of the long continuance of abuses: we allude to the astonishing ignorance (in relation to facts connected with that infamous traffic) which appeared in men, who from the eminence of their stations in the political world, might have been supposed to be acquainted with

every important particular capable of affecting either the interests or the character of their government: the labours of the illustrious Clarkson and his worthy coadjutors, brought to light and to the view of the people of England, a chain of enormities till then unsuspected by the mass, and to which credence could with difficulty be obtained even from the better informed. To this deficiency of information was ascribed, in part, the chilling indifference to the great cause he had at heart, which this champion of the rights of human nature had to encounter from men in power; and which required long and painful labour to overcome. May not the apathy which appears so prevalent among our countrymen on this subject, be attributed, in part, to the same cause? We should be unwilling to impute it to a *lower tone* of moral feeling in the members of a free government, than that, which in the subjects of an European monarchy, caused the voice of the nation to resound in the ears of its rulers, till the odium of the Slave Trade was wiped from the annals of their country.

Whence then *does* it arise, that in the bosom of this *Republic*, among a people calling themselves *Christians*,—in an age that arrogates the epithet “enlightened,” not only is Slavery still tolerated, but in some of the states, a slave-holder may with impunity, for the most trivial offence which pride may magnify into crime, bind, scourge and even put to death, the helpless victim of his rage; and that, too, with a refinement of cruelty which outrages the moral sense of the community, and rivals in horrors, the inquisition of Spain! And yet, for all this, no general expression of national feeling reaches the ears of our rulers; the tables of Congress groan not with petitions from every quarter of the Union, for a final

and total abstersion from this *soulest* stain!*—Have we laws for the protection of the horse from abusive treatment, and do we surrender our own species to receive, for imaginary crimes, a punishment to be meted out by the distorting scale of pride and revenge! Surely if these things *must* be,—if there exists not, as we have been told, in our republican institutions, “a redeeming spirit,” in vain shall we boast of the excellence of those institutions; and deem ourselves a wise, a virtuous, and happy people; we must be content, in a national capacity, to rank among those benighted millions on whom the compassionate religion of the gospel has not yet dawned.

We deem it matter for regret, that while the talents of our writers and public speakers are put in requisition to rouse the attention of the nation, to subjects of comparatively small importance, and but slightly connected with the virtue or prosperity of the country; *this* subject, so important to the happiness of millions in its actual state,—so portentous in its aspect to millions yet unborn,—and involving questions of the first magnitude to an enlightened people, should engage so small a share of public feeling, or public exertion. But we nevertheless hope the day is dawning, wherein, by the talents and energies which shall be combined in this glorious work, “those who have the power, and whose duty it is to cleanse us from *this* disgrace,” will be induced “to do so.”

* We pretend not to say whether in any of the states such outrages are permitted by law: But if the uncontradicted statements in our newspapers are correct, the conclusion is inevitable, that in some of the states either there exist no laws to prevent the most brutal treatment of slaves; or, there is not in the community, virtue enough to carry those laws into effect. In either case the state of society is deplorable; and the sin lies at the doors of those who have the making, and of those with whom rests the execution of the laws.

To effect this desirable union of talents and energy, more general and correct information of the real state of things among us appears to be a pre-requisite. The history of the abolition of the slave trade, may have a tendency to shew how far avarice may steel the heart of man against justice and compassion; but, as it relates to a trade that is now considered as legally abolished, it is doubtful whether it would have the effect of bringing the views of our countrymen to the required point—the state of things among ourselves. We would therefore respectfully suggest to the Convention the taking of measures for collecting and circulating such facts as may tend to elucidate this dark subject; and awaken throughout the Union, a more lively interest on behalf of the wretched African, and of our national character.

This Society being yet in its infancy, we can say but little on the subject of education. Our acting committee, at our last meeting, were specially charged with this part of our concern; and requested to collect the names of such coloured children as were entitled to the provisions made by law for the education of the poor; and to endeavour to put them in a way to receive that benefit.

We annex a list of our officers for the present year:

President, Wm. Wright; Vice-President, Wm. Vicary; Treasurer, Wm. F. Houston; Secretaries, Jos. Mifflin and John Barber; Counsellors, Wm. Jenkins, Esq. Lancaster, and Samuel Bacon, Esq. York, Pa.

Signed by order and on behalf of the Columbia, Pa. Abolition Society for promoting the abolition of slavery, &c.

WM. WRIGHT, President.

JOSEPH MIFFLIN, Secretary.

Columbia, 12 mo. 5th, 1818.

*To the American Convention for promoting the
Abolition of Slavery, &c.*

THE Abolition Society of Delaware, in looking forward to the approaching call of the Convention, have anticipated some useful and important results from their deliberations. It is believed to be a period, peculiarly interesting to the cause of the oppressed descendants of the African race. The minds of the people in different sections of our country, have been arrested by serious considerations on the subject of their degraded situation. Societies have risen up within these few years, in the midst of slaveholding states, who have plead their cause; and who have not only laboured for the melioration of their unhappy situation, but have advocated the general and total abolition of slavery. The voice of humanity has sounded in the halls of legislative assemblies, and in courts of justice, where once the cause of emancipation would not have been heard.

While we view the labours of philanthropists, thus extending the influence of correct opinions, and gradually paving the way for the accomplishment of so desirable an object as the abolition of slavery, we feel ourselves animated to continued and persevering exertions in this righteous cause, though many discouraging circumstances still present to cloud the brightening prospect which the labours of benevolent societies and individuals have opened to our view. Though we confidently believe that the march of philanthropy is steady and constant, and that the cause of the oppressed Africans is gradually gaining ground in the minds of our countrymen, yet we are well assured that to insure the final triumph of correct opinions, no effort in the power of the friends of abolition should be withheld.

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In order to evince the necessity of continued exertions, we need only advert to the violation of the spirit of the law of Congress prohibiting the importation of slaves into the United States; which violation has been sanctioned by those in power. The propriety of calling the attention of Congress to this subject, in order that a suitable remedy may be applied, is respectfully recommended to the Convention.

It is also a desirable object with the members of the Delaware Society, that the Convention should petition Congress for the abolition of slavery within the District of Columbia. This, it is believed, falls properly within the limits of the constitutional powers of the general government. Let the metropolis of a free and enlightened people, and the district over which the representatives of that people hold exclusive jurisdiction, no longer acknowledge, or legalize slavery.

The practice of carrying off free persons of colour from the northern and middle states, and consigning them to perpetual slavery in the south, still calls loudly for legislative interference. Congress alone have the power of applying a remedy, and it is thought no duty is more imperiously called for at their hands, than that of exercising the authority with which the constitution has clothed them for the suppression of this wicked traffic;—a traffic equally cruel and atrocious with the slave trade on the Coast of Africa.

The present condition of the inhabitants of St. Domingo, will probably claim the attention of the Convention. A correct knowledge of the political economy,—agriculture, and the state of education in that Island would be highly interesting to the friends of emancipation: and we believe there is no congregated body who can obtain that information with so

much facility as the Convention of the Abolition Societies.

Signed by order of the Abolition Society of Delaware, Wilmington, 10 mo. 16, 1818.

EDWARD WORRELL, President.

Attest—ISAAC JACKSON, Secretary.



*To the "American Convention for promoting
the Abolition of Slavery, &c."*

WE avail ourselves of the opportunity afforded us to acknowledge the receipt of your address of last year, which being read in our Society was attended to with much interest and satisfaction. Animated by the example set by those Societies and philanthropic individuals that have preceded us in the laudable work of meliorating the condition of the African race, we cannot but endeavour to follow in the path which has been trodden by some of the wisest and best men our country has produced, who regardless of popularity, have with a steady and undeviating firmness, pursued to condign punishment the midnight violator of the law, and of the peace, happiness and civil rights of that oppressed people.

We have since our last year's communication, been variously and actively engaged in promoting the grand object for which our association was instituted: viz. the protection of that portion of the descendants of Africa unlawfully held in bondage, or entitled to freedom at a given term; or upon a contingency. Seeing the lameness of the law in our State respecting blacks, we again petitioned our Legislature for a revision of the laws on that subject, or the enactment of others more congenial to the principles of justice

and the protection of this unfortunate class of people: and we are happy to state that we have so far succeeded as to procure that foul stain to be wiped from our statute book, which lodged a fellow man in prison, who could not at the instant produce his Certificate of freedom, and which if at length exhibited, could not regain his liberty without paying his own prison fees. Other laws have been passed, enabling us with more ease to test the validity of purchases made of these unfortunate people, and giving us the power to enter houses and vessels bearing strong marks of suspicion.

We have also petitioned Congress as the guardian of the rights and privileges of the people for which it legislates, to alter or amend the law relating to the clearance or entry of ships and other vessels navigating our waters coastwise, which would authorise the officers of custom to detain any ship or other vessel whose manifest did not satisfactorily point out the condition of the unfortunate victims that might be found on board them; and although our memorial was received, and the matter contained therein committed, we are sorry to say the relief asked for has not yet been afforded, but we have reason to hope we shall meet with better success the present session.

Our acting committee always vigilant in the discharge of its duties, has been constantly engaged in seeking out objects requiring its assistance and protection. Located, as we are, in this State, the mass of whose citizens have not yet seen that justice demands of them the sacrifice that our brethren of the northern section of our country have made, it consequently requires no common effort of the human mind to sustain a sufficient portion of buoyancy, to bear us up against the powerful current of opposition that presents itself, and threatens at every surge the destruction of all our hopes. Although we are beset

by many discouragements, yet we are strengthened by the knowledge of the fact that our cause is the cause of justice, and that it is not those who run well for a season only, that are enabled to gain the goal of their wishes: we therefore trust that our little band, by persevering in the duties allotted it, will at length overcome many of the difficulties which now present themselves, and be enabled to do much towards meliorating the condition of the hapless sons of Africa. In devoting our time, talents and means to soften the situation of that afflicted people, we have not been unmindful of the benefits that would be derived from tutoring their unlettered minds, we cannot yet, however, look towards it in any other than a prospective light: time, with its all smoothing quality, must wear away the prejudices of the people, before there can be a sufficient accumulation of funds, to advance that subject in this part of the vineyard.

In concluding this communication we cannot but hope that our feeble efforts will pave the way to a more general good, as the numbers which have been released from the tyrannic grasp of hardened kidnappers, have caused them to become more circumspect in our vicinity. We hail, as an auspicious omen, the establishment of another Society similar to ours in one of our neighbouring villages, (Centerville) whose objects flowing as ours from philanthropic principles alone, will we trust have a considerable influence, in producing a more general sympathetic feeling for the miseries of the ill-fated descendants of Africa.

ROBERT MOORE, President.

Attest—LAMBERT CLAYLAND, Secretary.

11th mo. 30th, 1818.

December 11th, 1810.

Ten o'clock A. M. Convention met pursuant to adjournment, and proceeded to business.

JOSHUA UNDERHILL and HUGH MCCORMICK, two of the delegates from New York, appeared and took their seats.

The Committee of Arrangement made the following Report:

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

The Committee of Arrangement beg leave to report, that having attentively considered the interesting and important subjects contained in the communications from the several societies, they respectfully propose the annexed Resolutions, as embracing those objects which particularly require the attention of the Convention at this period.

1. Resolved, That the sale of persons of colour, by the regulations adopted by the several states, under the authority of the 5th section of the act of Congress, passed March 2d, 1807, entitled "An act to prohibit the importation of slaves," be referred to a committee, to report by memorial to Congress or otherwise.

2. Resolved, That the subject of the education of the people of colour in the United States, be referred to a committee, to consider what measures it may be proper for this Convention to adopt in relation thereto.

3. Resolved, That the subject of endeavouring to obtain from Spain and the South American States, a relinquishment of the slave trade, and the memorial to Congress on that subject, by the New York Society, be referred to a committee.

4. Resolved, That the subject of the colonization of the free blacks in Africa or elsewhere, be considered by the Convention, in committee of the whole.

5. Resolved, That the situation of the slave population within the District of Columbia, be referred to a committee, to report thereon by memorial to Congress or otherwise.

6. Resolved, That the Acting Committee be instructed to collect such facts, as it may be in their power to obtain, in rela-

tion to the condition of people of colour in the slaveholding states; also in relation to the practice of kidnapping, and report thereon at the next session of the Convention.

Submitted by order of the Committee.

ABM. L. PENNOCK, Chairman.

Philad. 12 mo. [Dec.] 11th, 1818.

On motion, Resolved that the above Report, with the several resolutions therein proposed be adopted: whereupon the first, second, third and fifth resolutions were referred to the following special committees:

The first resolution, to Isaac M. Ely, Abraham L. Pennock and Joseph Bringhurst.

The second, to Roberts Vaux, Hiram Ketchum and William Wright.

The third, to Peter A. Jay, Abraham L. Pennock and Evan Lewis.

The fifth, to Jonas Preston, Evan Lewis and Joshua Underhill.

The Acting Committee made the following Report:

To the American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

The Acting Committee, desirous of furnishing the Convention with the knowledge of such of their transactions as it will be proper to lay before it at this session, respectfully Report, That since the last meeting of the Convention, they have received communications from three Societies lately established for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, who desire to send Delegates to the next Convention, viz. The Manumission Society of Guilford County, North Carolina, The Humane Society of Ohio, and The Columbia Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.—a delegation from each was accordingly invited. Shortly after the meeting of Congress last

year, a correspondence was opened with John Sergeant, Esq. one of the representatives in Congress from Pennsylvania, and formerly a member of the Convention, relative to the utility of memorializing Congress at that time, but from the information received from him, the Committee judged it most expedient to postpone it till the present session, in order to be prepared with some documents to shew the great extent of the inland traffic in slaves, and the numerous instances of kidnapping free people of colour, on which to found a petition for more vigorous laws on the subject: they addressed a circular to a number of humane individuals in the states adjoining Pennsylvania, which they expect will furnish them with many well authenticated cases of violence and cruelty to this oppressed people.

The Manumission Society of Tennessee having made arrangements to publish a periodical paper, to be entitled the **MANUMISSION INTELLIGENCER**, the Acting Committee believing it would subserve the cause we are engaged in, to encourage such a work, have subscribed to it on the part of the Convention. Agreeably to the instructions of the last Convention, they forwarded circulars to a number of individuals in the several states, to stimulate them to form new Associations to protect the rights of persons of colour and promote the final abolition of slavery, and they have the satisfaction to believe that one or more Societies have been established in consequence. William Dillwyn of London having received a copy of the proceedings of the last Convention, generously made us a donation of one hundred dollars as a testimony of his approbation; this increase of our funds enabled the Committee to assist two of the Societies who had made application for aid, they accordingly transmitted fifty dollars to each, viz. The Philanthropic Society of Easton, Md. and the Society for the Relief of People of Colour in Kent County, Delaware; they have also, in obedience to the resolution of the Convention, prepared an amended form of the Constitution, which accompanies this Report.

Respectfully submitted by order of the Committee.

BENJAMIN TUCKER, Chairman.

THOMAS SHIPLEY, Secretary.

Philadelphia, 12mo. 10, 1818.

The Acting Committee having been instructed at the last session of the Convention to suggest such alterations and amendments to the Constitution as they may deem proper; the amended form thereof,

accompanying their report, was taken up, considered by sections, and with further alterations, concurred with;—whereupon it was on motion, *Unanimously Resolved*, that the amended form of the Constitution, as subjoined, be adopted; to take effect on the first Tuesday of October 1819, at which time the next stated meeting of the Convention shall be held.

CONSTITUTION

OF

THE AMERICAN CONVENTION

For promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African race.

A consideration of the injustice, immorality and impolicy of SLAVERY, having induced, in various parts of the United States, the establishment of SOCIETIES for promoting its abolition, protecting that portion of the coloured population who are legally free, and improving the condition of the African race; and THEY, in order more completely to carry into effect their humane intentions, having formed an Association, composed of Delegates from each Society, have adopted for its government, the following

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

1. This Convention shall embrace every suitable occasion for advancing the common purposes of the Societies represented; it shall specially superintend the interests of the coloured population of the United States, and shall be known by the name and title of "THE AMERICAN CONVENTION FOR PROMOTING THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, AND IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF THE AFRICAN RACE."

2. The Convention shall be composed of such representatives, as the respective Societies associated to protect the rights of free persons of colour, or to promote the abolition of slavery, within the United States may think proper to appoint, provided that the number from any one Society shall not exceed ten.

3. All questions which shall come before the Convention, shall be decided by a majority of votes, except such as relate to the Constitution, and are hereafter provided for.

ARTICLE II.

1. The Convention shall meet biennially in the city of Philadelphia, on the first Tuesday in October. It may adjourn from time to time, to such place as it may deem proper, and may be specially convened as is hereinafter provided.

2. A representation from three Societies shall be a quorum to transact business, but adjournments may be made by a smaller number.

ARTICLE III.

1. The Officers of the Convention shall consist of a **PRESIDENT**, **VICE-PRESIDENT**, **TWO SECRETARIES**, and a **TREASURER**, who shall be elected by ballot at the stated meetings of the Convention, and at any other meetings when vacancies shall occur.

2. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Convention and preserve order therein. He shall have no vote in the decision of questions, except when there shall be an equal division.

3. The Vice-President shall perform the duties of President, in the absence of that officer.

4. The Secretaries shall keep accurate minutes of the proceedings of the Convention: One of them shall reside in Philadelphia, and have charge of the records.

5. The Treasurer shall keep the monies and other personal property of the Convention. Before he enters upon the duties of his office, he shall give to the President, for the use of the Convention, a bond in the sum of one thousand dollars, or in such other sum as the Convention may direct, for the faithful discharge of his trust. He shall furnish to the Convention at its stated meetings, and at other times when required, a statement of his accounts, and shall pay all orders drawn upon him by the Convention, or its Acting Committee.

ARTICLE IV.

1. An Acting Committee shall be appointed at the stated meetings of the Convention, and at other times, when a new arrangement may be expedient, to superintend and transact such business as may require attention during the recess of the Convention. They shall have power to supply any vacancies which may occur in their body.

2. The Acting Committee shall appoint a Chairman and Secretary, keep minutes of their transactions, and be subject to such rules for their government as the Convention may prescribe.

3. In case of the death or absence of any officer of the Convention, the Acting Committee, if necessary, shall make a temporary appointment to supply the vacancy during the recess of the Convention.

ARTICLE V.

1. All funds of the Convention, arising from contributions or otherwise, shall be at its sole disposal; special attention being at all times had to the exigencies of individual Societies.

2. All orders drawn upon the Treasurer by the Convention, shall be signed by the President, and one of the Secretaries, and those drawn by the Acting Committee, in performance of duties required by the Convention, shall be signed by their Chairman and Secretary.

ARTICLE VI.

1. Special meetings of the Convention may be called in cases of emergency, by the President, at the request of any two Societies of different States: due notice of which meetings shall be communicated by him to the several Societies, and to the Acting Committee of the Convention.

2. Additions and amendments to this Constitution shall be proposed at least *six months* previous to their adoption, and shall only be enacted with the concurrence of two thirds of the members convened.



Adjourned to meet at 7 o'clock, P. M.

Seven o'clock P. M. Convention met pursuant to adjournment, and proceeded to business.

JOSEPH LEA, a delegate from Pennsylvania, now appeared and took his seat.

The Committee on Resolution No. 2, made the following Report, which on motion was adopted.

To the "American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c."

THE committee to whom was referred the consideration of the subject of "the education of the people of colour in the United States, and what measures it may be fitter for this Convention to adopt in relation thereto,"

Respectfully Report,

That they are deeply impressed with the soundness of the sentiments and opinions, which have given origin to a new and interesting field of labour to the philanthropists of the world, whose energies have been enlisted, for the promotion of universal education. That they regard the improvements which have been made in the facility and economy, by which the rudiments of useful learning may be communicated to youth, especially upon the Lancasterian system, as a circumstance which cannot be duly estimated, with feelings inferior to those, which enable the mind to recognise and acknowledge, in such benefits, the interposition, and goodness of an Almighty Providence. On the numerous blessings which flow from education, whether we consider its advantages in relation with national prosperity and security, or individual happiness, it is now unnecessary to dwell; it appears to have become a maxim, with which the wise and good of all countries will accord, that it confers the most substantial charity, and promises the most ample rewards.

Whilst therefore it has become the cardinal duty of benevolent individuals and governments, and is even found to be the noble ambition of Princes, to disseminate education among the white portion of mankind, it surely becomes important that the long afflicted descendants of Africa, whom avarice and national policy, have removed from their native soil, and subjected to slavery in other countries, should partake of the advantages which must flow from education, as fitting them gradually with other meliorating measures, for the enjoyment of that freedom,

and happiness, which the common parent of mankind has designed to be the inheritance of his accountable beings.

With these opinions, and views, your Committee earnestly recommend to the Convention, the propriety of encouraging the respective Societies, to make the education of the people of colour a prominent object of their concern, and to promote by every means in their power, the removal of those objections, which unhappily beset the minds of slave-holders, in regard to this interesting obligation.

Your committee beg leave in conclusion, to submit the following resolution.

Resolved, that a Committee be appointed to prepare an address to the Abolition Societies of the United States, among other subjects, soliciting their especial care and attention to the education of people of colour.

ROBERTS VAUX.
HIRAM KETCHUM.
WM. WRIGHT.

Philadelphia, 12th month, (Dec.) 11, 1818.

Hiram Ketchum, Isaac M. Ely, William Wright, Samuel Hilles and Evan Lewis, were appointed a Committee to prepare the address to the Abolition Societies in the United States.

The Committee on Resolution No. 3, made the following report, which with the memorial accompanying it, were ordered to lie on the table.

To the "American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c."

THE Committee to whom was referred the consideration of measures proper to be pursued by this Convention relative to the slave-trade carried on by the South American States and by Spain, and also the memorial to Congress from the New-York Manumission Society, report.

That in their opinion it will be proper for this Convention to make application to Congress, praying that the influence of the United States may be exerted with the court of Spain to induce that country to prohibit the slave-trade, and that a stipulation for such prohibition, may be insisted on, in any treaty to be made with the South American States, or in case of any acknowledgment of their independence.

The Committee submit to the Convention whether such an application to Congress should be contained in a separate memorial, or whether it might not be more expedient to combine in one memorial, all the applications to be made by this Convention.

The Committee submit the draft of a memorial, in case the first alternative shall be preferred.

In behalf of the Committee,
PETER AUGUSTUS JAY, Chairman.

The Convention then resolved itself into a *committee of the whole* on the subject of colonization, in conformity with the 5th Resolution of the Committee of Arrangement. DR. JONAS PRESTON, in the chair. After some time spent in the consideration thereof, the Committee rose, and reported that it was their opinion that a select committee should be appointed, to ascertain and report facts in relation to the subject.

Whereupon, it was resolved, that the proposed plan of colonizing the free people of colour in Africa, be referred to a committee of five members to ascertain and report facts connected with that object, and to suggest such course of proceeding in the case, as in their opinion, it may be proper for this Convention to adopt.

Richard Peters, Junr. Peter A. Jay, Nathan Comstock, Joseph Bringhurst, and Abraham L. Pennock, were appointed to compose the committee.

Adjourned until 10 o'clock to-morrow morning.

December, 12th, 1818.

Ten o'clock A. M. Convention met and proceeded to business.

The Committee on Resolution No. 5, reported the draft of a memorial to Congress, on the subject of the slave population in the district of Columbia, which was ordered to lie upon the table.

At the request of the Convention, Prince Saunders and James Forten appeared before them. An interesting memoir on the present state of Hayti, was read by the former, and a general account of the condition of the people of colour in Philadelphia, given by the latter; whereupon the thanks of the Convention were presented to them by the President.

Adjourned until half past three, P. M.

Half past three, P. M.

Convention met, pursuant to adjournment.

The memorial to Congress, reported by the Committee on Resolution No. 3, was called up for consideration; and it being resolved that the subject thereof, should be submitted to Congress separate from other applications to that body, the memorial was adopted as follows:—

To the Honourable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

The Memorial of the American Convention for promoting the abolition of slavery and improving the condition of the African race,

Respectfully Sheweth;

THAT when these United States declared themselves independent, they proclaimed by the same act, that all men were created free, and that the Creator

had endowed them with an unalienable right to liberty—The truth thus solemnly proclaimed, is sanctioned by revelation and demonstrated by reason. These States founded upon it their right to be a Nation, and they became such, by acting in pursuance of it. It is self-evident that nothing can be more inconsistent with the principle thus solemnly announced and acted on, than the permission of a commerce in the bodies of men, by which countless multitudes of our fellow creatures and their innocent posterity are doomed to perpetual bondage. As America had the glory of being the first to proclaim solemnly to the world the equal rights of mankind, so she had the additional honour of striking the first blow at that abominable traffic, by which those rights are most heinously violated. No sooner had the national government power to legislate on the subject than Congress prohibited the slave trade.

It is with great pain your memorialists have perceived that the new Republics of South America, professing to act on the same principles which have led this country to Independence, Happiness and Glory, have nevertheless, with perhaps a single exception, refused to follow her example in sacrificing their pecuniary interest to the cause of liberty and mankind. At the very moment when they are resisting unto blood, the oppressions practised on themselves, they are condemning to a slavery infinitely more severe than that of which they complain, an incalculable number of men, who by their own acknowledgment are entitled to the same rights as they. Your memorialists had hoped that when the example given by Congress, had been followed by nearly all the civilized world, even by the most arbitrary monarchies, these new Republics just springing into life and acknowledging *Liberty* as their guardian and their guide, would not have been found among the most active agents of slavery.

Though your memorialists sympathize with every effort in the cause of freedom, they do not presume to offer an opinion on the course which this country should pursue in relation to the South American states, they confide in the wisdom of the general government to act on this subject, as duty and prudence shall direct; but if at any time those States shall be acknowledged, or if any treaties shall be made with them, your memorialists respectfully hope and pray, that this government will insist on the prohibition by them, of the most odious traffic which ever disgraced and afflicted mankind.

Your memorialists hope they will not be thought presumptuous, in suggesting that the government will acquire honour to itself and perform a real service to humanity, by uniting its efforts with those of the other enlightened nations of Christendom, to induce the Spanish court also, to terminate this odious commerce. Should the United States succeed in these objects, it will be a perpetual source of rational exultation, that they not only commenced the attack, but completed the victory over a hideous and formidable monster, which has desolated Africa, and polluted this, with the tears and the blood of another continent.

Signed on behalf and by order of the Convention, assembled at Philadelphia, December —, 1818.

On motion, Resolved that a Committee be appointed to prepare an address to the free people of colour in the United States, enjoining upon them the strict observance of moral, religious, and social duties. Thomas Shipley, Evan Lewis, Joseph M. Paul, and Hugh M'Cormick were appointed a Committee for that purpose.

The minutes of the KENTUCKY ABOLITION SOCIETY held in Frankfort County the 15th and 16th

of October 1817, with the circular address of that Association were introduced by a member and read. Whereupon it was RESOLVED, that we view with pleasure, the continued exertions of that Society in the cause of humanity, and that the Acting Committee be directed to forward to it, the usual number of copies of the minutes of the proceedings of this Convention.

A communication was introduced and read from Henry Crew, Secretary of the *Union Humane Society*, in Mount Pleasant, Ohio, accompanied with ten copies of an oration, pronounced before it, May 14, 1818. The objects of the Society, were stated, in the communication, to be parallel with those of the Convention, and they requested to be informed whether a representation from them to the Convention, would be desirable. The President reported that on receipt of the above, he had invited that Society to appoint Delegates to the Convention.

On motion, William Wright and Dr. Jonas Preston, Delegates from Columbia, were added to the Acting Committee.

Adjourned till 10 o'clock on Monday morning.

December, 14th, 1818.

Ten o'clock A. M. Convention met, and proceeded to business.

On motion, Resolved that a special Committee be appointed to prepare a memorial to Congress, for the signatures of the citizens of the United States, requesting the adoption of such provisions, as will exclude slavery from the limits of such territorial governments as may hereafter be established within our country, and prevent any such future territo-

ry from being erected into a state, unless slavery shall be prohibited by the constitution thereof.

Theodore Dwight, Hugh M'Cormick and Nathan Comstock, were appointed to compose said Committee.

On motion, Resolved that the expences which shall be incurred by the above Committee, in printing and distributing such number of copies of the memorial, as they may deem requisite, shall be paid from the funds of the Convention,

'The Committee to whom the Resolution No. I was referred, reported the draft of a memorial to Congress, on the subject of the sale of persons of colour, &c. which was ordered to lie upon the table.

Adjourned to half past six, this evening.

Half past six, P. M.

Convention met, agreeably to adjournment.

The Committee appointed to prepare an address to the free people of colour in the United States, reported the following draft, which being read and considered, was adopted.

To the free people of colour and descendants of the African race, in the United States.

The American Convention composed of Delegates from several Abolition and Manumission Societies in the United States, being assembled in Philadelphia, for the purpose of promoting the great cause of emancipation, and for the melioration of the condition and the general improvement of the descendants of the African race; have deemed it their duty to address you, on some subjects intimately connected with your future welfare and prosperity. They

perform this duty the more willingly, from a conviction that such counsel and advice as they may communicate, will be received and listened to with attention, from the circumstance of its proceeding from those who have long had your best interests at heart.

Vain will be the desire on the part of the friends of abolition, to behold their labours crowned with success, unless those coloured people who have obtained their freedom, should evince by their morality and orderly deportment, that they are deserving the rank and station which they have obtained in society: unavailing will be the most strenuous exertions of humane philanthropists in your behalf, if you should not be found to second their endeavours, by a course of conduct corresponding with the expectations and the wishes of your friends.

We intreat you therefore by the ties which bind us together as children of one common Creator;—by the obligation imposed upon us, as joint objects of redeeming love; as heirs alike with us, of the rewards and benedictions which rest upon all who perform the religious and social obligations of life with fidelity;—by the sacred duties which you owe to yourselves, and to the Author of your existence; seriously to consider the great responsibility which rests upon you as **F R E E M E N**, so to order and regulate your conduct and deportment in the world and amongst men, that your example may exhibit a standing refutation of the charge, that you are unworthy of freedom. And let us impress it upon you, whose opportunities of information have been greater than the generality of your colour, to use the influence which your superior knowledge may have given you among your brethren, to dissuade *them* from the commission and practice of those vices which degrade and

disgrace them in the eyes of mankind; particularly let it be your constant endeavour to repress among them dram drinking, frequenting of tippling shops and places of diversion, idleness and dissipation of every description, and to promote and encourage as much as possible, habits of sobriety, industry and economy, punctual attendance on places of religious worship, particularly on the day appointed for rest from labour, and for the exercises of devotion; avoiding noisy and disorderly conduct on those days, as well as at other times; and to demean themselves peaceably and respectfully, towards all those with whom they have intercourse. This will do more, towards advancing your cause in the earth, than the labours of your friends can effect in your behalf.

The great work of emancipation is not to be accomplished in a day;—it must be the result of time, of long and continued exertions: it is for you to show by an orderly and worthy deportment that you are deserving of the rank which you have attained. Endeavour as much as possible to use economy in your expences, so that you may be enabled to save from your earnings, something for the education of your children, and for your support in time of sickness, and in old age: and let all those who by attending to this admonition, have acquired the means, send their children to school as soon as they are old enough, where their morals will be an object of attention, as well as their improvement in school learning; and when they arrive at a suitable age, let it be your especial care to have them instructed in some mechanical art suited to their capacities, or in agricultural pursuits; by which they may afterwards be enabled to support themselves and a family. Encourage also, those among you who are qualified as teachers of schools, and when you are of ability to

pay, never send your children to free-schools; this may be considered as robbing the poor, of the opportunities which were intended for them alone.

Keep out of all contentions and law-suits with each other; by which your valuable time, which should be spent in useful occupations, is grievously misapplied, your money is wasted, and your character in the world, is unhappily injured and degraded:—it is a mortifying sight to your friends, to see the coloured people bringing each other before the civil officers and in courts of justice for trifling causes of contention, which by exercising an amiable and for bearing disposition might be easily settled, without going to law, and spending their time and money, in useless disputations.

Be faithful to the obligations of the marriage covenant. Be diligent in your respective callings, so that you may not disappoint the expectations of those who have confided in you, and in the capacity of domestics or hired servants, shew yourselves faithful; remembering that no situation in life is disgraceful in itself, but that upon your own conduct, will depend the estimation in which you will be held by others; and if you perform your duty with fidelity, you will be respected and esteemed. Be just in all your dealings, and strictly punctual in the performance of all your promises; so shall you gain the approbation and the confidence of your white neighbours, and justify the conduct of those who have laboured for your emancipation.

Let an especial attention be had to keep a regular record of your marriages, and of the births of your children, by which their ages may at any time be legally established;—this will be of essential service to you in placing them out as apprentices and prevent impositions being practised upon you. Final-

ly—be sober; be watchful over every part of your conduct, keeping constantly in view, that the freedom of many thousands of your colour, who still remain in slavery, will be hastened and promoted by your leading a life of virtue and sobriety.

On motion, Resolved that the Acting Committee be directed to cause such number of copies of the above address, to be printed and distributed, as they may think proper.

The Select Committee on the subject of colonization submitted a Report on the facts connected with that object, with the draft of an essay which they proposed for insertion in the circular address to the Societies:—The report of the Committee being read, was accepted, and is as follows;—

To the "American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery," &c.

The Committee to whom was referred the proposed plan of colonizing the free people of colour of the United States, in Africa, for the purpose of collecting facts, for the information of the Convention connected with that object, *Report:*

That deeply impressed with the magnitude of the duty entrusted to them, they have wished that an opportunity had been afforded to examine it extensively, and to present to the Convention a full detail of all the circumstances which might assist their deliberations on this interesting subject. They have been aware that sufficient time for this purpose could not be allowed to them, and they have therefore forbore to proceed further in the investigation, than has been deemed absolutely essential to a correct understanding of the proposed undertaking.

In tracing the history of the plan of colonizing the free people of colour of the United States, in Africa, the Committee have been disposed to adopt the opinion that it originated in the suggestions and observations, of a distinguished citizen of the

state of Virginia, who has with honour to himself, and advantage to his country, devoted himself to agriculture.—The existence of such persons in a community, claiming to hold their fellow men in bondage, was long since declared by him to be an evil of the greatest magnitude, extensively injurious to the interests of slave holders, and their removal advocated by the employment of force for this purpose, if other means should not be successful. He recommends, in one of his publications, "that lands, "within the controul of the National Legislature, shall be "procured for them, and if they should not be willing "to avail themselves of the option allowed to them to remove "there," he enquires, with no disapprobation of such proceedings, "whether the national safety and prosperity will "not justify harsher measures for this purpose."

The Legislature of Virginia acting as it is believed, under the influence of similar views, in 1816, adopted certain resolutions inviting the attention of the government of the United States, to a plan of colonization, "on the coast of Africa, or "some other place not within the states or territorial governments of the United States, to serve as an asylum for such "persons of colour, then free, who might desire the same, and "for those who might be afterwards emancipated within that "Commonwealth."

"The American Society for colonizing the free people of colour of the United States," was instituted after the promulgation of these wishes and opinions, and its purposes are presumed to have been directed by the same considerations. In their efforts to ascertain the views and designs of this association, the Committee have directed their attention to the proceedings which took place at its formation, and at its first annual meeting, and they beg leave to communicate some of the sentiments expressed on these occasions by those who have enrolled themselves among its members.

One gentleman declared "that it constituted no part of the "object of the society to touch or agitate a delicate question "connected with another portion of the coloured population "of the United States," and he stated "that it was only on "that condition he attended the meeting to establish the society."

Another gentleman, declared on the same occasion, "that it "appeared to him, it had not been sufficiently insisted on, with "a view to obtain the co-operation of all the citizens of the "United States, not only that the meeting does not in any wise "affect the question of negro slavery, but as far as it goes,

" must materially tend to secure the property of every master, " in the United States over his slaves. It appeared to him, that " this aspect of the question had not been sufficiently presented " to public view. It was a notorious fact, that the existence " of this mixed and intermediate population of free negroes, was " viewed by every slave-holder, as one of the greatest sources " of the insecurity, and also unprofitableness of slave property; " that they serve to excite, in their fellow beings, a feeling of " discontent, of repining at their situation, and that they act " as channels of communication, between different slaves of " different districts, and are the depositories of stolen goods " and the promoters of mischief."

At the first annual meeting of the Society in January, 1818, one of the members of the society declared, " that it was proper again and again to repeat, that it was far from the intention of the society to affect, in any manner, the tenure by which a certain species of property is held. He was himself a slave-holder, and he considered that kind of property as inviolable as any other in the country. He would resist, as soon and with as much firmness, encroachments upon it, as he would upon any property which he held."

From a reference to these facts, the Committee deem it their duty to state, that they have not been able to discern, in the constitution and proceedings of the American Colonization Society, or in the avowed sentiments of its members, any thing friendly to the abolition of slavery in the United States.

The Committee are forcibly impressed with the conviction, that the plan of colonizing the free people of colour proposed by the Society, is impracticable, and if it is practicable, that it will be attended with fatal consequences to those who shall embark in its purposes. Its effects upon the condition of the free people of colour, and on the slave population of the United States, they apprehend, may become greatly injurious.

It is impracticable, because the Committee are satisfied, that those whom it proposes to transport to Africa, are not willing to accept of the provisions in their favour which it professes to hold out. So far as the Committee have been able to ascertain the opinion and wishes of those persons, and their means for this purpose have not been few, there exists among them a determined opposition to the design. In the city of Philadelphia and its vicinity, this opposition has been manifested in a remonstrance, adopted at a very numerous meeting of the people of colour in the summer of 1817, and which has been recently re-published by them, and circulated among those with whom,

they have supposed, the same would have an influence. Those of this description of our fellow men, who are natives of our common country, acknowledge an alliance and affection for no other, and they consider themselves as well the children of that country, as we do ourselves. When among those whose ancestors emigrated here from Europe, there shall prevail a disposition to relinquish America and return it to its aboriginal possessors, then we may expect there will prevail among the free descendants of Africa, who are among us, a wish to return to its shores.

Nor is this the only obstacle to the execution of the plan. The magnitude of its expence, the almost unlimited pecuniary means it will require to conduct its operations, would interpose other and insuperable obstacles to its success. The free coloured population of the United States, by the census of 1810, numbered 186,446. Estimating the costs of transporting those persons at the small sum of one hundred dollars each, the amount would be 18,644,600 dollars; and after they should have been conveyed to Africa, but a small portion of the necessary expenditure would have been consumed. To feed and clothe the colonists, to furnish them with articles essential for their comfort, and requisite for the exercise of their industry, would call for thrice that amount; and thus the disbursements would be augmented to 54,933,800 dollars. But if we yield to the calculations of the partial advocates of the plan, and suppose but one sixth of the persons to be colonized, will demand to be provided for; then the sum of 9,322,300 dollars must be furnished; and the Committee have yet to learn, that a hope is encouraged by the Society, that they will be enabled to procure this amount.

In the failure which has attended the efforts of the nations of Europe, to establish colonies in Africa, the Committee have seen a confirmation of the opinion they have expressed, that the plan of the American Colonization Society is impracticable; and their apprehension of the ruin and misery, which would be visited on those who may participate in the attempt, have been increased. The Committee have, in vain, sought for evidence of the flourishing condition of any colony, located on the western shores of Africa, from the Cape of Good Hope to the Kingdom of Morocco. Great Britain, France, Spain, Denmark and Sweden, have each exerted themselves to colonize there, and they have all, in a great measure, failed in their efforts.

The Colony of Sierra Leone, the most extensive and numerous, known to the Committee, is represented to be in a "lan-

guishing condition," and the objects expected to result from it, are; it is said, about to be relinquished as hopeless. In the year 1787, when it was founded, its numbers were reduced by disease from four hundred and sixty, to two hundred and seventy-six. In 1789, the inhabitants were dispersed, and the town burnt to ashes, by an African chief, in revenge for some depredations committed by a Slave factor, to whose party two of the colonists had been compelled to serve as guides. Re-established in 1791, it flourished, for a time, under the superintendance of the virtuous Clarkson; but pillaged in 1794 by the French, it was afterwards found necessary by the company, who had charge of its interests, in consequence of difficulties which arose in regulating its concerns, and of its expences, to relinquish it to the crown of Great Britain. Since that event, a proposition has been publicly made, for its entire abandonment.*

A colony established in the island of Bulama, at the mouth of Rio Grande, by the English, under the direction of Lieutenant Philip Beaver in 1792; was attacked by the natives, pestilence swept off many of its members, and in 1793 the settlement was deserted and given up. The few remaining sufferers, who survived the ravages of war and disease, removed to Sierra Leone; and Lieutenant Beaver returned to Great Britain, after having expended, in one year, in this attempt to colonize two hundred and seventy-five persons, the sum of ten thousand pounds sterling.

In 1780, the government of Sweden undertook the erection of a colony near Goree. This was the first specific plan "for alleviating the evils, which the inhuman man-trade had occasioned in Africa," and to that nation is due "the glory of this "first attempt to vindicate insulted humanity, and to burst the "chains, which the sanction of ages had riveted, to demolish "the prison house, and to raise over its ruins the temple of free-dom."

Under the protection of a society formed at Norkoping in 1779, acting under a charter which authorised them to locate forty families on the coast of Africa, the adventurers, accompanied by enthusiasts in the cause of virtue and science, arrived at Goree in 1787. "The general war, excited by the rapacious and oppressive monopoly of the Senegal Company," had rendered the interior country entirely inaccessible, and obliged Wardstrom, the leader of the association, and his companions, to return to Europe.

* Communication from Sir James Lucas Yeo, published in the Philadelphia papers in the summer of 1812.

The last attempt to colonize, was made by the Danes in 1788, under the direction of Dr. Isert. His labours to accomplish the object, were soon after his arrival on the Coast, arrested by death; and it may be, that a small establishment was afterwards completed by lieutenant colonel Roer, who succeeded Dr. Isert, as the principal of the undertaking. It was placed in a district called Aquapin, of inconsiderable extent, and little of its present situation is known, or whether it has survived the scourge of pestilence, or the more destructive havoc of hostilities by the savage nations who surrounded it.

To these facts and observations, the Committee beg leave briefly to add; that the disastrous results of the different expeditions to explore the borders and interior of Africa, on the western coast; furnish abundant evidence of the dangers which will attend all who may attempt to occupy its shores; and the conclusion is irresistible, that if these enterprising adventurers, protected by the possession of all the means to guard them from destruction, which they must have enjoyed, were swept off; colonists would experience a harder and an earlier fate.

The Committee do not undertake to assert, that there may not be found, on the western shores of Africa, numerous rich and fertile tracts of country, abounding in all the fruits and productions of the luxuriant soils of tropical climates. But they claim the privilege to state, that so far as they have been able to obtain information, from which an opinion can be formed, these tracts are small in extent; widely separated, and many of them are placed nearly under the burning sun of the line; and they are constantly visited by diseases, which are fatal to all who are exposed to their influence. The mouths and banks of the rivers, where the most productive soil is always found, are, more particularly, exposed to pestilence and mortality. The country is in general occupied by a bold and martial race, entirely addicted to war; many of them of a large size, strong and well proportioned; their courage intrepid, and they are all tenacious and jealous of liberty. The character of the nations near the coast, as distinguished from those of the interior, is peculiarly ferocious and bloody.

To obtain a cession of lands from such people, in favour of pacific and unarmed strangers, could not be easily accomplished. To take possession of such a country by force, would require an army.

But should a territory of sufficient extent be found and its surrender obtained, by peaceful means; of what avail would be the cession? From whence would a guarantee of its perma-

nency be procured, and who could rely on any assurance of the validity of such a transfer? Let the security of any title thus derived, be appreciated by the observations which will be found in a work of great authority, "Leyden's Discoveries in Africa." "More formidable obstacles presented themselves, in prevailing on the native chiefs to ratify the surrender of territory, which had been formerly occupied." "The only property with which a savage is acquainted, consists of the fruits of the earth, his ornaments, arms, and instruments of hunting and fishing. He changes his habitation according to convenience, and never thinks of buying or selling the earth upon which he roams at large. His own possession of territory is temporary, he cannot therefore believe that any cession is perpetual. He admits a colony because he imagines it consists of his friends, or because the colonists have purchased his friendship, but as soon as he changes his opinion, and withdraws his friendship, he thinks himself completely justified in resuming that right, which he had abandoned without reflection."

Persuaded of the impracticability of prosperous colonization in Africa, and of the misery and suffering, in which an attempt to carry it into operation, would involve those who might engage in the undertaking, the Committee are desirous to present other considerations to the notice of the Convention.

The formation of a plan of colonization, in the bosom of the slaveholding states, for other purposes than those connected with the abolition of slavery, avowed as this plan has been, to have no such design; seems to portend, in the opinion of the Committee, to the cause for which our Societies have been associated, every thing which its friends and advocates ought to dread. In a just view of the subject, it may be contemplated, as fruitful of means to eternize the bondage of those of the African race who may be left behind the colonists; and as thus defeating the slow but certain progress of those principles, which, if uninterrupted, will produce their universal emancipation.

In the influence of this plan, on the condition of the free people of colour in the slaveholding states, it may be fatal to their prosperity. Objects of jealousy, fear and hatred to those, who hold their brothers in bondage, they will exercise on all occasions the power, with which they are invested, to regulate their situation, and legislate over them. If, when the opportunity to abandon their homes their friends and their kindred, by embarking for the colony in Africa, shall be offered to them, they shall desire to remain, in the country of their birth and of their

affections; other methods than compulsion will be employed, and they will thus be driven to adopt, as a refuge from suffering and oppression, transportation to a grave in Africa. Already have measures been resorted to in one of the states to the south, which, it is conjectured, may have been prompted by an expectation of success in the plan of establishing a colony in Africa. A heavy poll tax, levied exclusively on the free people of colour, has instructed them, as well in the knowledge of the power of those who legislate over them, as in their disposition to abuse that power. The option of voluntary emigration, and the protest which has always been avowed against the employment of compulsory means to increase the number of colonists, will avail nothing, if measures of this kind are adopted by those states, where a disposition to get rid of the free people of colour prevails.

The Committee are of opinion, that the most expedient mode of declaring the sense of the Convention on this important subject, will be by expressing it, in the proposed address to the Abolition Societies of the United States; and for this purpose, they have prepared certain paragraphs, herewith reported, which, if approved by the Convention, may form a part of that address.

All which is respectfully submitted, on behalf of the Committee.

RICHARD PETERS, Jr. Chairman.

On motion, the essay, accompanying the above report, was considered in *committee of the whole*: DR. JONAS PRESTON in the chair. The Committee, after a full examination of the subject, rose and reported sundry amendments, which were concurred with by the Convention. Whereupon, the essay as amended was unanimously adopted, and referred to the committee appointed to prepare a circular address to the Societies, to be incorporated with that address.

Leave of absence was granted to Joseph Bringhurst and Samuel Hilles, for the remainder of the session.

Adjourned to 11 o'clock to-morrow morning.

December 15th, 1818.

Eleven o'clock A. M. Convention met and proceeded to business.

The essays of memorials, on the subject of the sale of people of colour, illegally imported into the United States, and upon the situation of the slave population in the District of Columbia, were on motion, referred to the joint attention of the committees who reported them; with instructions to unite them in one memorial, and to incorporate therewith, a request to Congress for the revision of the act concerning fugitives from justice.

The following preamble and resolution, were moved, and adopted, viz.

The attention of the Convention having been called to the Island of St. Domingo or Hayti, and it being believed, that the cause of humanity would be promoted, if measures could be devised, whereby an end might be put to the unfortunate divisions which at present exist, between the two independent governments in that Island, and a pacification effected:

Resolved, That the President of the Convention, with the advice and assistance of the Acting Committee, be requested to open a correspondence with the African Institution of Great Britain, and with such influential and philanthropic individuals, in Europe and elsewhere, as he may think proper, upon these subjects; with a view to effect the objects expressed in the preamble to this resolution, and to promote such arrangements, as will render that island a safe asylum for such free people of colour in the United States and elsewhere, as may choose to emigrate to it.

A statement of the accounts of the Convention, was received from the Treasurer, shewing a cash bal-

lance in his hands of ninety-five dollars twenty-seven cents.

A communication was received from the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the abolition of slavery, &c. stating that the Society had appropriated sixty dollars, towards defraying the expences of the present special meeting of the Convention.

On motion, Resolved that this Convention entertains a grateful sense of the generous contribution made by WILLIAM DILLYN of London, in aid of the cause of emancipation, and that the thanks of the Convention be transmitted to him by the President.

The Committee appointed to prepare the circular address to the Societies, reported an essay, which being considered by paragraphs, was, with some amendments, unanimously adopted.

Adjourned to half past three o'clock.

Half past three o'clock P. M.

Convention met pursuant to adjournment.

The joint committees on the subject of preparing a memorial to Congress, reported an essay thereof, which being read, was with some amendments, adopted as follows;—

To the Honourable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

The Memorial of the American Convention for promoting the abolition of slavery, and improving the condition of the African race,

Respectfully Sheweth;

That a coincidence of circumstances materially affecting the interests of humanity, in relation to slavery

and the slave-trade, having induced a special meeting of the delegates of the several Societies in different parts of the United States, which compose this Convention, they are induced to solicit the attention of Congress to the following among other considerations which have claimed their serious deliberation.

By the law of March 1807, the introduction of slaves into the United States, was forbidden under certain penalties and forfeitures, which it was hoped would not be encountered by avarice or evaded by collusion, a provision in that law however, renewed and confirmed by the law of April 1818, allows that if slaves are imported, they shall be disposed of, agreeably to such regulations as may be made by the legislatures of the several states, where the importation takes place, a provision which goes far to defeat the declared object of the law.

The policy which prevails in the slave-holding states, authorises their sale, and fixes upon them the seal of perpetual bondage. The law of Congress therefore in its practical operation, does in fact consign persons to that very slavery, which its general spirit and its severe penalties would, on the first impression, seem calculated to prevent. That the temptations to import are stronger than the terrors which the laws hold out, is not now a matter of suspicion, but of public notoriety. On the 20th of July last, 139 negroes were sold by the sheriff of New-Orleans, as having been brought there in violation of the laws of the United States; and on the 26th of August following, 63 were sold at Milledgeville, in Georgia, on account of a similar introduction; several other instances of a like character, it is confidently believed, have occurred in Louisiana, and that the trade is still covertly prosecuted, in different forms, with activity and profit.



Of the disposition which has been made of the proceeds of the forfeitures already incurred, your memorialists have no certain intelligence; but for the honour of their country, in common with a large portion of the community, whose feelings have been strongly excited by these circumstances, they anxiously hope, that no part of this price of human blood and sinews, has stained the national treasury.

That the law as it now stands, does not and will not prevent importations is obvious; but they believe that a provision which should increase the penalties, and declare every person, illegally imported as a slave, to be free, would strike at the root of the evil, by destroying the motives which now exist for the violation of the law.

Your memorialists beg leave also to observe, that under the act of Congress, entitled "An Act respecting fugitives from justice and persons escaping from the service of their masters," various outrages upon the liberties of persons legally entitled to their freedom, have been committed. They forbear to enter circumstantially into a consideration of these outrages, or of the proper means of relief, as the subject was fully exhibited to the view of Congress at its last session, but they respectfully solicit your renewed attention to this important concern, as the evil still continues, and the remedy, which is solely in your power, remains to be applied.

Your memorialists are likewise desirous of calling your attention to the territory over which Congress holds exclusive legislation. The patriot, the philosopher and the statesman look to this spot, where the legislative authority of the republic has an uncontrollable operation, for that perfect system of laws, which shall at once develop the wisdom of the government, and display the justice and benevolence of its policy!

Is it not an incongruous exhibition to ourselves, as well as to foreigners who may visit the seat of the government of the nation; whose distinguished characteristic is its devotion to freedom; whose constitution proclaims that all men are born equally free, to behold, on the one hand, the representatives of the people asserting with impassioned eloquence, the unalienable rights of man; and on the other, to see our fellow men, children of the same Almighty Father, heirs like ourselves of immortality, doomed for a difference of complexion, themselves and their posterity to hopeless bondage?

Deeply impressed with these considerations, your memorialists do earnestly but respectfully request your honourable body, to take into your serious consideration, the situation of slavery in the District of Columbia, and to devise a plan for its gradual but certain termination, within the limits of your exclusive legislation; by which all children, born of slaves after a determinate period, shall be free.

Signed on behalf and by order of the Convention, assembled at Philadelphia, December 15th, 1818.

On motion, Resolved that the President sign, and cause to be presented to both houses of Congress, the memorials to that body, adopted by this Convention, and that in their transmission, precedence be given to the above memorial.

On motion, Resolved that the Acting Committee be directed to employ some suitable person, to collect, at the expence of the convention, the laws of the several states respecting slaves and servants of colour; to digest the same, and if they deem it expedient, to cause such digest to be printed for the use of the Societies.

On motion of a delegate from New York, it was unanimously resolved, that the thanks of this Convention be returned to Richard Peters, jr. Esq. for the zeal, ability, and attention, with which he has presided over the convention, during its present session.

On motion, Resolved that the minutes of the proceedings of this Convention, with the circular address, &c. be published by the Acting Committee, and that the usual number of copies be transmitted to the several societies.

Adjourned, sine die.

Attest,

ISAAC M. ELY, Secretary.

CIRCULAR ADDRESS

*To the Abolition and Manumission Societies in
the United States of America.*

While in taking a retrospect of the blessings with which the exertions of the friends to the emancipation of the African race have been crowned, the American Convention for the abolition of slavery, assembled at Philadelphia, see much cause to send forth the warm incense of gratitude to the GIVER of every good and perfect gift; they find in the vast and as yet unexplored field before them, sufficient to call forth the exertions of every friend to humanity.

The present period, more than any which has preceded it in the annals of time, is distinguished for a zeal to enlighten the human mind. When it is considered that MIND distinguishes man from inferior orders of beings, and that it is in reference

to the soul of man, that he is said to be formed after the image of his Creator; it is a subject of admiration, that the obvious truth has not been before discovered and practised upon by christendom, that the only means for promoting the happiness of human beings, is moral and intellectual cultivation. But, though the acknowledgement of this truth is late, we hail the date of its general influence, as a most auspicious aera in the history of man. In the operations of that philanthropy, which in some countries of christendom beside our own, has seemed of late to warm the human bosom, from the throne to the cottage, we think we trace the footsteps of **HIM** who willeth not the death of a sinner!

But while we witness with delight the doings of philanthropy, whatever may be their object, may we not be permitted to suggest what object ought, in our opinion, to claim the primary and best exertions of American philanthropy.

It is one of those trite but vain injunctions frequently repeated in common life, "be just before you are generous." The man who would rob the family which properly looked to him for subsistence, by the contribution of his means to the support of any other object, however laudable in itself, we should regard, if not worse than an infidel, at least unjust. The principle of morality which enjoins this duty upon an individual, is equally obligatory upon a nation, and enforces upon that nation the necessity of making the melioration of condition, and improvement of its own citizens, objects of its primary concern.

If the correctness of the above reasoning be admitted, it will not, it is thought, be denied, that the United States of America, and consequently all the citizens of those states, are bound by strong moral

obligation to relieve the wants and promote the welfare of all the poor and destitute in this country, by every means in their power. Of all the poor, of all the destitute human beings in our country, the descendants of Africa stand pre-eminent. Gladly would this convention see these objects of their care, enrolled among the participators of that philanthropy which characterises the present age. Gladly would we witness them the recipients of that favour, which the governments of our country, and the munificence of our fellow citizens at large, are wont to bestow upon the needy and wretched in this land, which seems to be the object of kind Heaven's peculiar blessings. But let it be remembered that in behalf of the African race in our country, we appeal to this great free community, not simply as petitioners for charity; no, we demand redress for injuries. The long catalogue of Africa's wrongs is known, even to our children, and the large share which our own country has contributed to the wretchedness of her sons, must be regarded as the blackest stain upon our national annals. Impressed with a sense of its inhumanity, the legislature of our country has abolished the slave trade, and some of our states have made laws in favour of emancipation. But shall the friends of abolition rest satisfied with these attainments? No: let it not be forgotten that near one million and an half of slaves yet people our land; and in many states of our union no steps whatever have been taken towards the gradual emancipation of their slave population. The convention would wish to awaken the patriotism and benevolence of every American citizen to this subject. Was the declaration of our Independence meant only to furnish an idle theme for declamation, when it asserts that all men are born with an equal right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? Does reason

or revelation acknowledge that superior privileges should attach to men of a particular colour? And yet the slave, in some portions of our country, is not only tasked with the severest duties, but the light of knowledge is debarred his mind, by municipal provisions.

The only arguments to be offered in justification or palliation of these crying enormities, are built upon the assumption that the African race is of an order of beings inferior to our own, or that admitting him to be entitled to his freedom, and the other privileges of a native citizen of our country, it is not *expedient* at once, to emancipate him. The fallacy of the first argument may be amply shown by a reference to the progress in learning, and the ardent desire of improvement, manifested in the African free schools under the patronage of some of your societies. And as to the latter argument, the convention would observe, that those state regulations by which a termination has been assigned, at a future day, to the slavery or servitude of the African descendants within the controul of such states, have met their decided approbation. If the slave-holders of our country, will only affix a period for the final termination of slavery, within such time as may be consistent with their own safety, and the preparation of the slave by previous education, for the enjoyment of liberty, this Convention, in behalf of abolition, will ask no more of them.

But while the convention are firmly persuaded that the truths and arguments above stated are incontrovertible, they do not flatter themselves that their practical operation upon mankind, will be witnessed to any considerable extent, until after the long continued, and active exertions of the friends of emancipation! and it is thought by the convention that these exertions can not be applied in any man-

ner more favourable to the accomplishment of the object desired, than by the education of slaves and free persons-of colour.

The mendicity and wretchedness of free persons of colour, are sometimes made the basis of an argument opposed to emancipation. If the propounder of this argument would but advert to the fact, that the degradation of the African is attributable to the fault of his own; so far from finding in this degradation, a justification for the continuance of slavery, he would, it is thought, find sufficient motives to double his exertions for the improvement of the wretched victim of avarice and oppression. But when it is seen that those allowances for the African race, which would be induced by the consideration adverted to, are not made; the friends of abolition are required to educate to the utmost of their ability, all those persons of colour within the sphere of their influence. This course is recommended, not only by the advantages which such education would confer on the individual subjects of it, but that this despised race may be possessed of sufficient intelligence to make an appeal in behalf of themselves, and those who are free, in behalf of their enslaved brethren, to the moral sense of individuals and the nation. Nor should the literary and moral education of African children, limit your endeavours for their improvement; it is highly proper, that exertions should be used to establish them in trades and other employments, that thus they may become respectable and useful members of society. The convention have been informed that African children and adults have been taught, with no inconsiderable success, in the city of New York and its vicinity, in **SUNDAY SCHOOLS**; they would therefore recommend the establishment of these schools for their instruction, during such hours of the day, as will not interfere with due attendance upon public worship.

There is one other subject upon which the convention deem it their duty to address you.

It being important that those who are engaged in the same cause, should act in concert, the convention think it prudent to express an opinion upon a project which has excited much attention, and which may have an influence on the future destinies of the African race. We mean the scheme for removing the free people of colour, from the United States to some spot on the coast of Africa. We have investigated this scheme with great care, and bestowed upon it much and serious deliberation: the result has been a very decided opinion that it ought not to receive the support of the friends of universal emancipation. The limits of this address will not allow us to do more than to mention some of the principal reasons for this opinion.

In the first place, and this alone is sufficient, the people of colour are averse to the plan, and cannot be transported to Africa unless by force. A remonstrance from those who are in the city of Philadelphia, where their number is considerable, which will be printed with this address, shews the view in which they regard the scheme in question, and we have reason to believe that similar feelings prevail very universally. We think also, that the situation of these people would not be improved by their transportation. They labour it is true under a disadvantage here, but they are natives of this country, in a great part of which, they are protected by equal laws, enjoy the consolation of religion, and the advantages of instruction. By industry they can procure a competence; and all the benefits bestowed upon our nation by science and the arts, are to a certain extent necessarily communicated to them. We cannot perceive that their happiness would be

increased by removing them to the unwholesome shores of Africa, where in addition to all the hardships usually encountered by new colonists, they would be exposed to the hostility of the barbarous inhabitants, and liable to fall victims to any European power, with which the United States shall be at war. Not yet sufficiently enlightened to govern themselves, they must there, as well as here, be subjected to white rulers; and with all these disadvantages their improvement would probably be retarded instead of being accelerated. The colony of Sierra Leone, though founded and cherished by the wisest and most active philanthropists, and aided by the British government, yet languishes, and has realized few of the expectations which were entertained by its projectors. We doubt however, whether the scheme be practicable. There is reason to believe, though upon this point we would not speak positively, that on the whole Atlantic coast of Africa, south of the great Desert, no place can be found in a healthy climate, unembarrassed by European claims, in which there is a tract of land, fit for cultivation and lying in one body, sufficiently extensive to support a colony numerous enough to defend its own independence. But supposing a site to be found in every respect proper for the purpose, and supposing the free people of colour willing to be removed, how are they to be transported? To send only a few, it is obvious would have no influence on the welfare of this country, or of those who remain here. The total number at the last census of free persons of colour, was upwards of 186,000, and it has since considerably increased. Let any one calculate the millions it would cost, to transport this number of people, to feed and maintain them till they shall have cleared and cultivated the ground, and the annual expence of a large military establishment kept up in Africa to defend them, and then answer whether the Congress will-

be willing to impose, or the people of the United States to pay, the taxes which would be necessary for so profuse an expenditure: even if these difficulties were removed, we would ask what form of government it is intended to frame for the colony? Is it intended to form it into a territory, and in due time to admit it into the Union, as a state? We presume not. Is it intended that it shall always be governed by the United States, and that Congress shall have power to bind it in all cases whatsoever? Since the colonists will be free citizens of the United States, will they not carry with them the rights which they now enjoy, and be entitled in regard to the parent country, to all the privileges which these states claimed while British colonies? Or is the colony to be erected into an independent nation? In that case we shall cease to have any right to controul them, and though no one can foresee, yet all must apprehend the consequences to result from a nation, so composed as that will be. Such and so many are the difficulties and embarrassments with which this project is attended, that we cannot help regarding its accomplishment, as being at the least extremely improbable. Besides, it has been candidly avowed, by some of the advocates of this scheme, that one of the objects to be answered by it, is to render property in slaves more secure. Now our object being gradually to abolish this kind of property, we do not perceive the expediency of our supporting a measure, the tendency of which, is admitted by some of its most distinguished friends, to be hostile to the purpose which we are labouring to effect. It may be asked, why if we suppose this scheme impracticable, we think it necessary to notice it? We do so, because we fear that the existence of the scheme may be injurious. Should it receive the approbation of Congress or of the legislatures of the slave states, so as to induce an expectation, in those parts of the Union that it will be executed, it

is highly probable that the question of emancipation will become connected with it; in that case every attempt to procure a gradual abolition of slavery will be resisted, on the ground that measures for that purpose cannot conveniently be taken, until a colony shall be established, to which the liberated slaves may be transported; and thus the very impracticability of the plan will render it mischievous. We shall only add, that upon a very dispassionate review of the subject, we are confirmed in the opinion expressed in our resolution, passed in August 1817, in the following words. "Resolved as the sense of "this Convention, and explanatory of its views of "this interesting subject, that the gradual and total "emancipation of all persons of colour, and their "literary and moral education, should precede their "colonization."

We have also taken into consideration the expediency of promoting the emigration of free people of colour to the island of Hayti, which it is understood would be encouraged by the governments there. But on this subject much remains to be known, before a decided opinion can be prudently formed.

Before concluding this address, the convention would notice with much satisfaction, the act of the state of New Jersey to prohibit the exportation of slaves or servants of colour out of that state. The convention deem the benevolent exertions of their friends in that state, as worthy of all praise, and the decided expression of the public sentiment, signified in the passage of that law, by the unanimous consent of the Legislature, is calculated to cheer the hopes of the philanthropist.

*Signed on behalf and by order of the Convention,
December 15, 1818.*

RICHARD PETERS, Jr. President.

Attest—ISAAC M. ELY, Secretary.

Address of the free people of colour in Philadelphia,

REFERRED TO IN THE PRECEDING CIRCULAR.

At a numerous meeting of the free people of colour of the city and county of Philadelphia, held in pursuance of public notice, at the school house in Green's court, on the evening of August 10th 1817, for the purpose of taking into consideration the plan of colonizing the free people of colour of the United States, on the coast of Africa, James Forten, was appointed chairman, and Russell Parrott, secretary. *Resolved unanimously*, that the following address, signed on behalf of the meeting, by the chairman and secretary, be published and circulated.

To the humane and benevolent Inhabitants of the city and country of Philadelphia.

THE free people of colour, assembled together, under circumstances of deep interest to their happiness and welfare, humbly and respectfully, lay before you this expression of their feelings and apprehensions.

Relieved from the miseries of slavery, many of us by your aid, possessing the benefits which industry and integrity in this prosperous country assure to all its inhabitants, enjoying the rich blessings of religion, by opportunities of worshiping the only true God, under the light of Christianity, each of us according to his understanding; and having afforded to us and to our children the means of education and improvement; we have no wish to separate from our present homes, for any purpose whatever. Contented with our present situation and condition we are not desirous of increasing their prosperity, but by honest efforts and by the use of those opportunities for their improvement, which the constitution and laws allow to all. It is therefore with painful solicitude, and sorrowing regret, we have seen a plan for colonizing the free people of colour of the United States on the coast of Africa, brought forward under the auspices and sanction of gentlemen whose names give value to all they recommend, and who certainly are among the wisest, the best, and the most benevolent of men, in this great nation.

If the plan of colonizing, is intended for our benefit; and those who now promote it, will never seek our injury; we

humblly and respectfully urge, that it is not asked for by us; nor will it be required by any circumstances, in our present or future condition; as long as we shall be permitted to share the protection of the excellent laws, and just government which we now enjoy, in common with every individual of the community.

We therefore, a portion of those, who are objects of this plan, and among those whose happiness, with that of others of our colour, it is intended to promote; with humble and grateful acknowledgments to those who have devised it, renounce, and disclaim every connection with it; and respectfully but firmly declare our determination, not to participate in any part of it.

If this plan of colonization now proposed, is intended to provide a refuge and a dwelling for a portion of our brethren, who are now held in slavery in the south, we have other and stronger objections to it, and we entreat your consideration of them.

The ultimate and final abolition of slavery in the United States, is, under the guidance and protection of a just God, progressing. Every year witnesses the release of numbers of the victims of oppression, and affords new and safe assurances that the freedom of all will in the end be accomplished. As they are thus, by degrees relieved from bondage, our brethren have opportunities for instruction and improvement; and thus they become in some measure fitted for their liberty.—Every year, many of us have restored to us by the gradual, but certain march of the cause of abolition—Parents, from whom we have been long separated—Wives and children, whom we had left in servitude—and Brothers, in blood as well as in early sufferings, from whom we had been long parted.

But if the emancipation of our kindred, shall, when the plan of colonization shall go into effect, be attended with transportation to a distant land, and shall be granted on no other condition; the consolation for our past sufferings and of those of our colour, who are in slavery; which have hitherto been, and under the present situation of things, would continue to be afforded to us and to them, will cease for ever. The cords, which now connect them with us, will be stretched by the distance to which their ends will be carried, until they break; and all the sources of happiness, which affection and connexion, and blood bestow, will be ours or theirs no more.

Nor do we view the colonization of those who may become emancipated by its operation among our southern brethren, as capable of producing their happiness. Unprepared by edu-

cation, and a knowledge of the truths of our blessed religion, for their new situation, those who will thus become colonists will themselves be surrounded by every suffering which can afflict the members of the human family.

Without arts, without habits of industry, and unaccustomed to provide by their own exertions and foresight for their wants, the colony will soon become the abode of every vice and the home of every misery. Soon will the light of Christianity, which now dawns among that section of our species, be shut out by the clouds of ignorance, and their day of life be closed, without the illuminations of the Gospel.

To those of our brethren, who shall be left behind, there will be assured perpetual slavery and augmented sufferings.—Diminished in numbers the slave population of the southern states, which by its magnitude alarms its proprietors, will be easily secured. Those among their bondmen, who feel that they should be free, by rights which all mankind have from God and from nature, and who thus may become dangerous to the quiet of their masters, will be sent to the colony; and the tame and submissive will be retained, and subjected to increased rigour. Year after year, will witness these means to assure safety and submission among their slaves; and the southern masters will colonize only those whom it may be dangerous to keep among them. The bondage of a large portion of our brethren will thus be rendered perpetual.

Should the anticipations of misery and want among the colonists, which with great deference we have submitted to your better judgment, be realized; to emancipate and transport to the colony, will be held forth by slave-holders, as the worst and heaviest of punishments; and they will be threatened and successfully used, to enforce increased submission to their wishes, and subjection to their commands.

Nor ought the sufferings and sorrows, which must be produced by an exercise of the right to transport and colonize, such only of their slaves as may be selected by the slave-holders escape the attention and consideration of those whom with all humility we now address. Parents will be torn from their children—husbands from their wives—brothers from brothers—and all the heart-rending agonies which were endured by our forefathers when they were dragged into bondage from Africa, will be again renewed, and with increased anguish. The shores of America, will like the sands of Africa, be watered by the tears of those who will be left behind. Those who shall be carried away will roam childless, widowed, and alone, over the burning plains of Guinea.

Disclaiming, as we emphatically do, a wish or desire to interpose our opinions and feelings between all plans of colonization, and the judgment of those whose wisdom as far exceeds ours, as their situations are exalted above ours; *We humbly, respectfully, and fervently intreat and beseech your disapprobation of the plan of colonization now offered by "the American society for colonizing the free people of colour of the United States."*—Here, in the city of Philadelphia, where the voice of the suffering sons of Africa was first heard; where was first commenced the work of abolition, on which Heaven hath smiled, for it could have had success only from the Great Maker; let not a purpose be assisted which will stay the cause of the entire abolition of slavery in the United States, and which may defeat it altogether; which proffers to those who do not ask for them what it calls benefits, but which they consider injuries; and which must insure to the multitudes whose prayers can only reach you through us, *miserу, and sufferings, and perpetual slavery.*

JAMES FORTEN, Chairman.

RUSSELL PARROTT, Secretary.

MINUTES
OF
THE SIXTEENTH
AMERICAN CONVENTION
FOR PROMOTING
THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY,
AND IMPROVING
THE CONDITION OF THE AFRICAN RACE.

HELD AT PHILADELPHIA,
ON THE FIFTH OF OCTOBER, AND THE TENTH OF NOVEMBER, 1819.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE CONVENTION.
William Fry, Printer.
1819.



MINUTES.

AT a stated meeting of the sixteenth "American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery and improving the condition of the African Race," convened in Philadelphia, October the 5th, 1819:—

Richard Peters, Jun. was appointed Chairman, and Eli Hilles, Secretary; when in consideration of the attendance of so few of the delegates to the Convention, it was on motion resolved, to adjourn to half past three o'clock this afternoon.—Adjourned.

At three o'clock P. M., the members of the Convention met, pursuant to adjournment.

By reference to the credentials now produced, it appears that the following persons are delegated to represent their respective Societies, in this Convention.

From New York.

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Hugh McCormick | Reuben Leggett |
| Hiram Ketchum | Isaac M. Ely |
| Theodore Dwight | Robert F. Mott |
| James Palmer | |

Pennsylvania.

| | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| William Rawle | Jonas Preston |
| Richard Peters, Jun. | Edwin A. Atlee |
| Benjamin R. Morgan | David Paul Brown |
| George Boyd | Richard C. Wood |
| Joseph Parrish | Thomas Shipley |

Columbia, (Penn.)

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| William Wright | Charles Lukins |
| Joseph Mifflin | Joseph Quail |
| Jonas Preston | |

Delaware.

Joseph Bringhurst
William Gibbons
Evan Lewis

John Wales
Eli Hilles

Of whom were present:

Reuben Leggett, Robert F. Mott, Thomas Shipley, Richard C. Wood, Richard Peters, Jun. John Wales, William Wright, Eli Hilles, William Rawle, Jonas Preston, Edwin A. Atlee, Evan Lewis, Joseph Parrish.

On motion resolved, that the meeting now proceed to the election of the officers of the Convention.

Upon balloting for them, it appeared that Richard Peters, Jun. was duly elected President,

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Evan Lewis | Vice President, |
| Robert F. Mott | { Secretaries, |
| Richard C. Wood | |
| and Jonas Preston | 'Treasurer. |

The following communications from the Societies of New York, Pennsylvania, Columbia and Delaware were presented and read.

To the "American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African race," to be assembled at Philadelphia on the first Tuesday of October, 1819.

The New York Society, for promoting the manumission of slaves, and protecting such of them as have been, or may be liberated, have appointed delegates to attend the meeting of the Convention, at the time and place above-mentioned.

Since our communication in December last, very little either of a general or local nature, within our own immediate sphere, has occurred, which calls for any extraordinary notice from the Convention.

The great objects on which our Societies, the Convention, and the friends of humanity throughout the world, fasten a steady eye, are, the abolition of the traffic in human blood; the melioration of the condition of those who are, and who have been its victims, and the gradual and final liberation of every captive. With hands that do not tire, and with hearts that do not faint,

we are continuing, according to our means and opportunities, in the course that the wisdom of our predecessors has pointed out, and that experience has sanctioned. Our school is numerously attended, faithfully instructed and liberally supported. The vigilance of our committees, has, as we believe, materially circumscribed, in this part of the country, the lawless violence of the kidnapper, and has in most instances, successfully resisted the claims of those, who without right have endeavoured to drag individuals into slavery, under colour of the laws.

Public opinion is silently, and gradually, but firmly, supporting our labours, and we confidently hope, that ere long, there will be but one feeling and one judgment on the subject of slavery.

We would on this occasion, renew with earnestness to the Convention our wish, that the great question, whether slavery shall be permitted to extend itself to our new States and Territories, may claim their most serious attention. We think that the immediate and lasting interests of this country, as well as the paramount principles of rectitude, are deeply involved in the decision which shall be given to the question by our national councils. It will probably be decided at the next session of Congress; and unless a powerful effort is made by the friends of freedom in every part of the nation, we must look to the issue with the most fearful apprehensions.

So important do we deem it, that we take the liberty of going beyond the limits usually observed in our addresses to the Convention, and of recommending specifically the appointment of a delegation to Washington, formed of men whose talents, integrity and standing in the community, would give weight to their opinions and efforts, and who would punctually attend there during the session of the national legislature. This, with such other measures as the wisdom of the Convention may suggest, will we hope, do much to prevent the adoption of a principle, which if once admitted, will find no limits to its expansion, until the chain of slavery has crossed the continent, and is fastened on the shores of the Pacific ocean.

The officers of the Society are nearly the same that they were at our last report. We subjoin a list of their names. It will be perceived that a change has taken place in the office of treasurer, occasioned by the death of John Murray, Jun. In adverting to the death of our late treasurer, whose character and worth must be well known to all the members of the Convention, we

can with propriety, ask for your sympathy in our loss. He assisted in organizing this society, was the treasurer from its institution; was ardent in the cause which it maintains, and rejoiced both in its labours of kindness and prospects of success. His heart was the abode of benevolence; he delighted in doing good, and the tribute which is universally paid to his virtues, has verified the declaration that "the memory of the just is blessed." We have appointed the following persons as delegates to attend the approaching session of the Convention. Hugh McCormick, Hiram Ketchum, Theodore Dwight, James Palmer, Reuben Leggett, Isaac M. Ely, Robert F. Mott.

Officers of the Society.

Cadwallader D. Colden, President; George Newbold, First Vice President; Peter A. Jay, Second Vice President.

Jeremiah Thompson, Secretary; Robert White, Assistant Secretary.

Robert C. Cornell, Treasurer and Register.

David S. Brown, Chairman; and Samuel Willetts, Secretary of the Standing Committee.

R. F. Mott, Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

Hiram Ketchum, Chairman; Isaac M. Ely, Secretary of the Committee of Correspondence.

Israel Corse, Chairman; Reuben Leggett, Secretary of the Committee of Ways and Means.

Cadwallader D. Colden, Peter A. Jay, William Slossen, Isaac M. Ely, Benjamin Clark, Thomas A. Emmett, William Sampson, and Hiram Ketchum, Counsellors.

Signed on behalf of the Society,

CADWALLADER D. COLDEN, *President.*



To the "American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African race."

In conformity with the constitution, under which we are united with other societies having views friendly to the abolition of human slavery, the Pennsylvania Society have appointed the gentlemen whose names are herewith communicated, to represent them in your approaching Convention..

Persuaded of the advantages, which will continue to arise to the common cause in which we are embarked, by those oppor-

tunities for united deliberation and exertion, which are only afforded through the medium of the Convention, we feel assured of the importance of your approaching session, and indulge in pleasing anticipations of its usefulness.

The cause for which we are advocates, is of no ordinary kind. It has for its object the happiness of more than one million of our fellow beings, and of millions yet unborn! It is of no speculative and doubtful character, for it is founded upon the simple and imperishable truth, that "all men are created free and equal." The precepts of religion, the dictates of reason and of equity, equally confirm this great truth, against which avarice, under the specious garb of expediency, is the only assailant!

When we revert to the act which made these States free and independent, we discover that this principle was amply comprehended, and solemnly recognised; and when we have reference to the constitutions of government, which the citizens of the United States in the exercise of a calm and sober discretion have adopted, we perceive in most of them the same principle conspicuously developed and confirmed.

The American people are then bound by every consideration of justice and consistency, to bring to the earliest practicable termination, the system of slavery which exists in the bosom of our republic, so irreconcileable to its professions and to its principles.

Impressed with a sense of this obligation, many of our best and wisest statesmen, who justly considered our declaration of independence as religiously pledging us to a course of national policy, founded upon the immutable right of mankind to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," early after the eventful period of the revolution, felt it their duty to commence a system for the gradual abolition of slavery. To Pennsylvania belongs the honour of having passed the first legislative act for enforcing so desirable a purpose, and as the preamble to that act is but little known, though replete with feelings of the most dignified kind, and such as freemen who had recently shaken off the manacles of oppression must have felt, we take the liberty of submitting it to your view. It is in these words:

"When we contemplate our abhorrence of that condition, to which the arms and tyranny of Great Britain were exerted to reduce us, when we look back on that variety of dangers to which we have been exposed, and how miraculously our wants in many instances have been supplied, and our deliverances

wrought, when even hope and human fortitude have been unequal to the conflict, we are unavoidably led to a serious and grateful sense of the manifold blessings, which we have undeservedly received from the hand of that Being, from whom every good and perfect gift cometh. Impressed with these ideas, we conceive that it is our duty, and we rejoice that it is in our power to extend a portion of that freedom to others, which hath been extended to us; and a release from that state of thralldom, to which we ourselves were tyrannically doomed, and from which we have now every prospect of being delivered. It is not for us to enquire why, in the creation of mankind, the inhabitants of the several parts of the earth were distinguished by a difference in feature or complexion. It is sufficient to know that all are the work of an Almighty hand. We find, in the distribution of the human species, that the most fertile, as well as the most barren parts of the earth are inhabited by men of complexions different from ours, and from each other; from whence we reasonably, as well as religiously may infer, that he who placed them in their various situations, hath extended equally his care and protection to all, and that it becometh not us to counteract his mercies.

"We esteem it a peculiar blessing granted to us, that we are enabled this day to add one more step to universal civilization, by removing, as much as possible, the sorrows of those who have lived in undeserved bondage, and from which, by the assumed authority of the kings of Great Britain, no effectual relief could be obtained. Weaned by a long course of experience from those narrow prejudices and partialities we had imbibed, we find our hearts enlarged with kindness and benevolence towards men of all conditions and nations; and we feel ourselves at this particular period extraordinarily called upon, by the blessings which we have received, to manifest the sincerity of our profession, and to give a substantial proof of our gratitude."

Had these just and admirable sentiments influenced all the states forming the American Union, liberty and happiness would now have been assured to the vast population, which within our republican country, are groaning under the most vile and hateful bondage which has ever existed. Yet the efforts which such sentiments have inspired, have produced fruits so extensively useful, that we derive from them much occasion of thankfulness to God, who has blessed them with many incentives to perseverance in the great and beneficent work in which

we are engaged. May we not believe they have averted the anger of a righteous but merciful Providence, whose judgments upon us, for national ingratitude and the sin of oppression, would otherwise have overwhelmed us with consternation and woe.

While therefore the Abolitionists of our country have encouragement to persevere, we anxiously hope they will retain in view the lessons of experience, and avoid substituting for them, schemes howsoever splendid yet of questionable result. We have removed from the slave his shackles, and yet retained him in our country without hazard to our tranquillity, and have derived important advantages from his labour, rendered more energetic and productive by his character and his feelings as a free-man. Throughout our vast empire, millions of acres are unpeopled and uncultivated. Shall we deny to the emancipated black, that reparation and oblivion of his wrongs, which would be afforded him by a comfortable home, a fruitful soil, the protection of our laws, the benefits of our example, the consolations of our religion, and the advantages of our literary and moral acquirements, while we open our doors and extend our hand to strangers and aliens of whom we know nothing, and to whom we owe nothing. For ourselves there is but one principle upon which we can act. It is the principle of immutable justice! we can make no compromise with the prejudices of slavery, or with the slavery of prejudice. The same arguments that are now urged against emancipation, unless the subjects of it be removed from our territory, were used with more plausibility, when abolition was an experiment; yet they were combatted with success, and where now is the free state that would bring again upon itself the curses of slavery? It is indeed true that the minds of that oppressed people, who have claimed our sympathy, remain in some degree under the thralldom from which we have liberated their bodies; yet the new springs to action which liberty inspires, and to which each new attainment gives increased energy, have co-operated with education, to produce with unexpected rapidity the elevation of many of them to a respectable standing, and will finally efface from all, those deep incisions which the chains they have borne, have mercilessly imprinted on them. With these views we would ask of you to abate nothing of your ardour to procure by all fair and honourable means, the total and most early abolition of slavery, consistent with the interest of the objects of your care.

Not only the Societies whom you immediately represent, look to your operations with deep interest and solicitude, but your fellow citizens who are friendly to the rights of humanity, expect from your extended information, your enlightened counsels and concentrated action, results of the most beneficial kind.

We request your consideration, whether it will not be expedient for you to address Congress upon the subject of kidnapping, praying that their authority may be interposed for its prevention or punishment. By innumerable modes of seduction and force, free citizens of our commonwealth are removed into other States, and there disposed of as slaves. The State where the crime is committed, has rarely the opportunity of punishing the aggressor, while his miserable victim, far from his friends and all means of establishing his freedom, is consigned to bondage for life. The crime is a frequent and increasing one, and while we believe a remedy is within the power of Congress, it is important to endeavour to obtain it.

It frequently occurs, that persons, under indenture for a limited time, are removed from the State in which they were bound, to a State where slavery is allowed and in which the maxim of justice is reversed, and every person having a black complexion, who cannot prove himself to be free, is considered as a slave.

By the laws also of some of the States, free persons of colour, passing upon their lawful business, may be arrested and imprisoned until they can produce testimony of their freedom, and when such testimony is obtained, if unable to discharge the prison fees, they are sold as slaves for the payment thereof. These various methods of manufacturing slaves in one State, out of the free citizens of another State, is intimately connected with the subject of kidnapping, and imperiously calls for some appropriate remedy.

The education of coloured children, and the apprenticing of them to trades, has always been a subject of deep interest with us. The Convention have done much to impress on the public mind the importance of these concerns. Anticipating the probability of this nation becoming extensively a manufacturing one, we perceive a new field of industry opening, in which we trust they will be permitted to participate.

We have noticed, with strong emotions of pleasure, the decided opposition, made by a majority of the representative

branch of Congress, to the admission of new States into the Union, whose constitution of government shall not prohibit the existence of slavery among them, and although the question has not been definitively settled by the concurrence of the senate, we confidently hope that every examination of the principle it involves, will gain new advocates to the cause of liberty. While therefore we look forward to the approaching Congress, with an anxiety in some degree, commensurate with the magnitude of the question which will probably then be determined, affecting in its consequences, not only the immediate interests of humanity, but also the character, safety and perpetuity of this widely extended republic; we feel a strong persuasion that the result will do honour to our Federal Legislature.

Whatever may be esteemed by individual States as their proper policy in relation to slavery, national policy, supported as we trust by the sentiments of the people, is averse to it.

Hence we feel a desire, that the deliberations of our national councils should be upon a free soil; that the atmosphere breathed by the centinels of our liberty, should be uncontaminated by the fetid and pestiferous breath of slavery. It is the boast of regal Britain, that not a slave can breathe its air. It ought to be that of republican America, in relation at least to the seat of its government, over which it has the exclusive power of legislation, that there, is exemplified the highest perfection of human freedom.

Our Society has received an accession of active members, since the last report to the Convention on this subject. We continue to persevere in promoting the object of our institution, and have succeeded in numerous instances in rescuing from bondage the destined victims of oppression. There are now three persons awaiting their trial for kidnapping. Our schools at Clarkson Hall continue to afford to many children the means of education. They exhibit an order and proficiency among the pupils, which place them in proud comparison with any other seminaries; but we have to regret our inability to institute schools in remote parts of the city, so as to diffuse more extensively the benefits of education among children of colour. An address to the public, excited in part by the depressed state of our finances, which have thus limited our usefulness, exhibiting "the origin, purposes and utility of our institutions," a copy of which we present, has been extensively circulated. We hope it may remove some groundless prejudices, and be productive of

much advantage to our cause. May we each, in our several spheres, continue to embrace every opportunity to advance the interest of our African brethren, and we doubt not such exertions will bring upon us, upon them, and upon our common country the blessing of Divine Providence.

We have appointed William Rawle, Richard Peters, Jun., Benjamin R. Morgan, George Boyd, Joseph Parrish, Jonas Preston, Edwin A. Atlee, David Paul Brown, Richard C. Wood and Thomas Shipley our representatives, and as usual annexed a list of the officers of the Society.

Signed by order and on behalf of a meeting of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c. held 9th mo. 9th, 1819.

J. PRESTON, Vice President.

Attest, BENJAMIN WILLIAMS, Secretary.

Officers of the Society.

William Rawle, Esq., President; Joseph M. Paul, Jonas Preston, M. D. Vice Presidents; Thomas Shipley, Treasurer; Benjamin Williams, Blakey Sharpless, Secretaries.

John Hallowell, Richard Peters, Jun., Richard C. Wood, John Sergeant, William Delany, David Paul Brown, Charles Smith, (Lancaster), George Fisher, (Harrisburg), Counsellors.

Gilbert Gaw, Daniel Smith, G., William Master, Lindzey Nicholson, James Cox, Henry Troth, William Shaw, M. D., John P. Milnor, Benjamin C. Parvin, William Folwell, Jun., William Bryant, Ellis Stokes, Electing Committee.

Abraham L. Pennock, Samuel Webb, C., Joseph Walton, Blakey Sharpless, Philip Price, Jun., William Wayne, Jun., George Boyd, Edward Needles, Caleb Richardson, Othniel Alsop, Joseph Parker, Joseph Ridgway, William P. Paxson, Board of Education.

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

THE peculiar circumstances of the Columbia Pennsylvania Society for the abolition of slavery, &c. (it being virtually but an auxiliary to the highly respectable and influential Society previously established in this state,) may form our apology, if our communications to the Convention should be found less in-

teresting than those of our sister societies, whose local circumstances constitute them, more especially, the centinels in the great common cause in which we are embarked. We presume, however, that it will not be unacceptable to the Convention, nor altogether useless in strengthening the hands of others, to receive some evidence that though our sphere is small, yet we have not lost sight of the objects of our association. In our address last year, we briefly noticed our attention to education: hitherto we have not succeeded according to our wishes, in this interesting department of the duty of Abolitionists: the concern has not, however, been stationary; schools, both in Columbia and York, have been opened for the instruction of people of colour, and have been kept up for various terms, and with various success. A school is about to be opened under the auspices of this Society, and to be taught by a member; of the probable number that may avail themselves of this benefit, we can form at present but a vague estimate, but from the increase of interest manifested on this subject, we have grounds to hope that our efforts will not be unavailing. There is also another school in this place, which, though not under the control of this Society, yet as its operation is concurrent with the objects we are labouring for, we deem it not irrelevant to notice in this communication. We allude to the Sunday School for coloured people: this school was instituted in January last, by the "Sabbath School Society" of this place, and has been kept up ever since. The number of scholars entered are eighty-five, consisting of nearly equal numbers of children and adults. The regular scholars, on an average, have been about forty, twenty-six of whom can read in the Bible and Testament. The superintendent is a citizen, and member of the Abolition Society.

Before we dismiss this subject, we would take advantage of the channel thus opened, for the interchange of sentiments between the different Societies represented in the Convention, to observe, that it appears to us that the literary and religious instruction of the free coloured population of these states, is a subject which ought, for divers important reasons, more and more, to claim the serious attention and patient exertions of the advocates of universal emancipation. In your last circular address to the Abolition and Manumission Societies, it is stated that the number of free people of colour in the United States, is upwards of 186,000; this is a formidable number, and it is obvious that their conduct will tend either to strengthen or to

weaken the hands of the friends of emancipation. If marked by indolence, dissipation and vice, it will afford an argument, which, however false and unjust in itself, will not fail in the hands of their enemies, with greater or less effect, to obstruct the spreading of our views and feelings, to the prevalence of which we must look for the ultimate success of our cause. When we consider then, that whether this part of our population (which is continually increasing) shall impede or assist the progress of the cause, much depends on the labour bestowed upon their education, how momentous does the subject appear! and how much does it behoove the several Abolition Societies, more especially those which are located in sections of our country where slavery is no longer sanctioned by law, to use all reasonable endeavours to promote this desirable end!

Divers attempts to infringe the laws of the states, by carrying away persons of colour without authority or without sufficient evidence of their being slaves, have occurred since our last report; but through the vigilance of our acting committees, these nefarious designs have generally been frustrated. The attention of our acting committee is at present turned to an interesting case of a different character. A certain Izard Bacon, of Virginia, by his will, manumitted all his slaves which he should die possessed of; and an act of assembly being necessary to confirm their title to freedom, such an act was accordingly obtained, and pursuant thereto an order from the Supreme Court of Chancery, for their removal out of the state. They were accordingly conducted to this place by a nephew of one of the trustees, and placed under the care of our acting committee: they are in number fifty-five, of whom sixteen are minors; such of the latter as were not too small to leave their parents, have been bound out, but to find suitable places for the adults is yet a desideratum.

It is with mingled sentiments of indignation and regret, that we observe, that though the slave trade has been renounced, not only by this government, but also by almost all the powers of Europe, there are governments, which, instead of following these noble examples, in defiance of public feeling, not only continue to prosecute the trade, but, as if dead to any stimulus but the sordid love of gain, are actually deriving a sacriligeous profit from the sacrifices which have been made on the altars of justice and humanity: still more are we shocked to observe, that among these barbarous aliens to the commonwealth of mankind, there should be found many, (we fear very many,) who

claim this country as the land of their nativity. But we hope that this subject will not constitute, in the deliberations of the ensuing session of Congress, a less prominent object, than it appears, from late dates, to have made in the British Parliament. Whether any steps can be taken, by the Convention, tending to induce the United States of America to adopt such measures, in concurrence with Great Britain, as would effectually tend to the final suppression of this abominable trade, we submit to your consideration.

List of Officers for the present year.

President, William Wright; Vice President, William Vickery; Treasurer, William F. Houston; Secretaries, William Kirkwood and James E. Mifflin; Counsellors, James Hopkins, Esq. and William Jenkins, Esq. Lancaster, and Samuel Bacon, Esq. York, Pennsylvania.

We have appointed William Wright, Joseph Mifflin, Jonas Preston, Charles Lukens, and Joseph Quail, to represent us in the ensuing Convention.

Signed on behalf of the Columbia Pennsylvania Society, for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c. the 4th of the 9th mo. (Sept.) 1819.

WILLIAM WRIGHT, President.

WILLIAM KIRKWOOD, Sec'y.

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

The Delaware Society, for promoting the abolition of slavery, in addressing the Convention, are impressed with a sense of the importance of the present crisis, in relation to the cause they have espoused.

While we view, with feelings of gratitude, the advances which the cause of emancipation has made in some sections of our country, and the laudable exertions of many of its distinguished advocates, to restore the long oppressed descendants of the Africans to their inherent rights; we cannot withhold the expression of our regret at the dereliction of others, whom we had reason to consider their friends.

On taking a view of the future settlement of the extensive territory of the United States, west of the Mississippi, we

deem it of the highest national importance to the future repose and prosperity of this great republic, that some effectual measures should be adopted by the general government, to prescribe limits to the future extension of slavery in that district.

The power of Congress, effectually to limit the extension of slavery in that country, has been doubted by some; but we conceive, that although the States existing at the time of the formation of the federal constitution, reserved to themselves the right of legislating on the subject of slavery, yet, that this being an affair of compromise between those States, would not, nor did not, control the constitutional exercise of a power in Congress, to exclude slavery from such States as might be admitted into the Union, from any acquired territory, beyond the limits of the United States, as they then existed.

But, believing that the members of the Convention will unite with us in these opinions, it is not thought necessary to enforce them by any arguments. Some observations, however, on the general tendency of the restriction alluded to, may not be irrelevant in this place. It is believed, from the prevailing tide of emigration to the westward, that the country beyond the Mississippi will be rapidly settled; and, that at no very distant period, that portion of our country will become a very important part of the republic, and from its population, wealth, and resources, will acquire preponderating influence in the national councils: but whether this influence shall be beneficial, or disastrous to the nation, will depend upon the moral character of the citizens who compose that population. It will doubtless be admitted, that nothing has a more powerful tendency to demoralize any people, than the existence of slavery to any great extent. The habits and prejudices which grow out of such a state of society, are directly opposed to the development of those virtues, which characterize the great and the good of every age.

Shall we then people this fine country with tyrants and slaves, instead of republicans; or shall we draw a line, beyond which this wide wasting pestilence, this scourge and curse of the nation, shall not be permitted to pass? It depends on the wisdom and virtue of Congress to decide this momentous question. Again; if the slave holding interest obtain a decided preponderance in the national government, what ground have we to hope, that any representations which the friends of emancipation may think proper to make, on this subject, will even

be tolerated? none!—It then becomes an interesting question to the Convention, what measures ought to be taken in relation to this important subject. We would suggest the propriety of bringing it before the different Abolition Societies, through the medium of the circular address.

The efforts making in England, and other parts of Europe, by the friends of African liberty, furnish cause for mutual congratulations. Wilberforce and Clarkson remain at their posts. Some of the noble veterans, who, during the last twenty years, have pleaded, in the British Parliament, with successful eloquence, for those who have groaned under the horrors of slavery, continue to advocate, with unyielding courage, the emancipation of Africa, from the shackles and avarice of Spain and Portugal. Their hairs have grown gray, while pleading for mercy and humanity, towards the afflicted people of colour; but we hope their silvery honours will not descend to the grave, till they shall be able to say, in the voice of triumph, truth, justice, and mercy have succeeded—the slave trade is abolished.

The Delaware Society has been instrumental in rescuing from illegal bondage, a few blacks, since we last addressed you; but the number of cases of this description, which have fallen under their notice, has not been very considerable.

The education of the children of coloured people, continues to claim the attention, and call forth the exertions of the humane and the benevolent. A school continues to be maintained and superintended, by a society in Wilmington, in which, from thirty to forty children are daily taught by a man of colour; and it is gratifying to observe those children receive instruction, with a facility equal to those of our own colour. There are also two other schools in the town of Wilmington; one for small coloured girls, conducted by an association of young women, which promises to be of important advantage to those children; the other is a First-day school, kept by a few young men, in which adults, as well as children, are taught. These last named are both free schools, and are instructive examples, of what the pious dedication of a few individuals may achieve.

We have instructed our delegates to deliver to the Convention, a copy of a report made by a committee of our Society, respecting the constitutional powers of Congress, to prohibit or restrict slavery, within the Territories belonging to the

United States, or new States on their admission into the federal compact.

Our delegates to the Convention are, Joseph Bringhurst, John Wales, Evan Lewis, Eli Hilles, and William Gibbons.

The officers of the Society are, President, John Reynolds; Vice-Presidents, Eli Hilles and Robert Porter; Secretary, Samuel Hilles; Treasurer, William Seal; Acting Committee, John Jones, Joseph Grubb, Benjamin Ferris, Henry J. Pepper, and Charles Canby.

Approved at a meeting of the Abolition Society of Delaware, held 9th mo. 29th, 1819.

JOHN REYNOLDS, President.

Attest, **SAMUEL HILLES, Secretary.**

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Report of a Committee of the Delaware Society, respecting the constitutional powers of Congress, to prohibit or restrict slavery within the Territories belonging to the United States, or new States on their admission into the federal compact.

The committee to whom was referred the subject of the powers of Congress, to restrict slavery in the proposed State of Missouri and the Territory of Arkansaw, respectfully submit the following report:

The committee are deeply impressed with the importance of the subject submitted to their consideration. A question, arising under the constitution of the United States, the great charter of our liberties, involving the respective powers and rights of the federal and state governments; a question, upon the issue of which depends the probable welfare and happiness, or the certain misery of so many millions of the descendants of Africa; and the decision of which must greatly affect, if not entirely determine, the character and duration of the American republic; demands the most serious attention and the most dispassionate and candid discussion.

Your committee have therefore viewed with much regret and alarm, the temper and disposition that were exhibited in the debate upon this subject, in Congress at its last session. Whilst some of the members, abandoning the open field of candid inquiry, and fair argument, contended, that any act of Congress restricting slavery in the proposed state of Missouri,

would be disregarded and contemned by the people, and thereby be rendered nugatory; others assumed the tone of defiance, and the language of menace and contumely.

If this momentous question is to be decided under the influence of feelings, such as those that have been recently manifested, the advocates for the restriction of slavery cannot but tremble for the result, and still more deeply deplore the fate of those unoffending and unhappy beings, who will become its certain and miserable victims. It therefore becomes highly important, that the public attention should be immediately and properly directed to the subject, and that the opinions and sense of the legislatures of the respective States, whose weight and influence in the scale of the Union, are to be materially and deeply affected by the decision of the question, should be speedily ascertained, and openly expressed.

There has been, in the opinion of your committee, a period in our national history, at which the public voice on this question would not have been divided. When, under the wrongs and tyranny practised towards this country by the government of Great Britain, the hearts and minds of the citizens were feelingly alive upon the subject of civil liberty; when, it was unanimously declared, by the Thirteen United States of America, "that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed;" if it had been suggested, that one object of the union, was not only to perpetuate the odious state of slavery, but to extend it beyond its present limits; that, so far from a right being reserved to the federal government to restrict the evil, they might be compelled to aid its extension; the accusation would have been repelled with indignation, and considered a libel upon the American character.

Many of those illustrious characters who framed our constitution, it is fair to presume, would have preferred the evils under which our country then struggled, to the adoption of a constitution, which might entail bondage upon so many millions, and spread it over a country of such wide extent, as would, most certainly, become the property of the United States, and be incorporated into the Union. But, more clearly to illustrate the feelings and opinions which prevailed upon this

subject, we refer to acts, which leave no room for doubt or misapprehension.

On the sixth of April; 1776, even previous to the declaration of our independence, the importation of slaves was expressly prohibited. Upon the cession, to the United States, of the Territory north-west of the river Ohio, a cession too, it is to be remarked, to which a slave-holding state, Virginia, was a party; an ordinance was passed, by Congress, on the thirteenth of July, 1787, the sixth article of which is in the following words: "*There shall be neither slavery, nor involuntary servitude, in the said Territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted. Provided always, that any person, escaping into the same, from whom labour, or servitude, is lawfully claimed, in any one of the original States, such fugitives may be lawfully reclaimed, and conveyed to the person claiming his, or her labour, or servitude, as aforesaid.*

These acts, exhibiting a contemporaneous exposition of the powers of Congress over the subject under consideration, afford the fairest, and best rule of construction that can be given. It is the rule by which judges are guided in the construction of statutes, and in the application of the principles, and maxims of the common law; and it is the rule, to which common sense would refer, to ascertain the meaning of any ancient grant of power, or charter of rights, about which doubts could arise.

The question then fairly occurs, in what respect has the present constitution of the United States abridged, altered or destroyed, the powers which Congress possessed and exercised over this subject, under the articles of confederation? By the second article of confederation, "each state retains its

sovereignty, freedom, and independence; and every power, jurisdiction and right, which is not, by this confederation, expressly delegated to the United States, in Congress assembled." Nor is there any provision to be found in the act of confederation, authorizing Congress to legislate upon the subject of the importation of slaves, or their migration, or to admit new States, except Canada should agree to the confederation, unless such admission be agreed to by nine States; nor to pass laws, or regulations, in regard to the Territory of the United States. Hence it will appear, that far less power was delegated to Congress, by the articles of confederation, than is now possessed under the present constitution. For the power which Congress now possess under the constitution, the committee beg leave to refer to the ninth section of the first article of the constitution, which provides, that "the migration, or importation, of such persons, as any of the States, *now* existing, shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress, prior to the year 1808." The peculiar phraseology of this clause is worthy of remark. In no other part of the constitution where the States are mentioned, are they mentioned as the States *now* existing.

It is just, therefore, to infer, that the importation of slaves, and of course the existence of slavery, was strictly limited to the States then existing; and that no State or Territory, that should afterwards be incorporated into the Union, could be considered, in regard to this clause of the constitution, in the same light as the States then composing the Union. So also, in the ordinance of 1787, already alluded to, we observe a similar phraseology, where it provides, that any person escaping into that Territory, from whom labour, or service, is lawfully claimed in any one of the *original States*, such fugitive, may be lawfully reclaimed, &c.: holding the same language, and conveying the same idea, of the restriction of servitude to the States *then* existing.

Congress have not been remiss in exercising a part of the power, granted in the last recited clauses of the constitution. Laws have been enacted, prohibiting the importation of slaves since the year 1808, under very severe penalties. In regard to their migration, though no act of Congress has yet been made to prohibit it, yet an act has been passed, regulating the mode of their conveyance and passages coastwise, which clearly indicates, that Congress considered itself as having the power of

legislating on the subject. We refer to the eighth and ninth sections of the act passed March 1st, 1807, which enacts, "that the master of any vessel of forty tons or more, from and after, the first day of January, 1808, sailing coastwise, having on board any negro, mulatto, or person of colour, for the purpose of transporting them to be sold as slaves, shall subscribe duplicate manifests of every such negro, and shall severally swear that the persons therein specified, were not brought into the United States after the first day of January, 1808, and that under the laws of the State, they were held to service or labour." Under the term "person," therefore, mentioned in the ninth clause of the first article of the constitution, it has been considered by Congress, that slaves, negroes and mulattoes, are meant and included, and that their migration, or importation, to use the words of the constitution, may be prohibited after the year 1807.

With regard to the true meaning and intent of the words, migration and importation, as used in the constitution, your committee have no doubts. They do not find that even in common parlance, or by authors of approved authority, they are used or considered as synonymous. Importation, is the act of bringing into a country from abroad; migration, is the act of changing place in the same country. But, had it been intended to vest in Congress by this clause, no other or further power than that of prohibiting importation, the meaning could not have been more simply or plainly expressed, than by the term importation alone. The word migration, being tautological, would not have been used.

But, whatever doubts may be entertained upon this branch of the subject, your committee are of opinion, there can be none, as to the power of Congress to restrict slavery in the Territories of the United States, and in those States which are to be admitted into the Union. In the third section of the fourth article of the constitution, it is thus provided: "The Congress shall have power to dispose of, and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the Territory or other property belonging to the United States," and in the same section it is also provided, that new states may be admitted by Congress into their Union. Language could hardly be found to express a more full and ample delegation of power, than is contained in these clauses. To dispose of or sell a territory, to make all needful rules and regulations respecting it, or to admit it into the Union, seem to be powers,

that confer upon Congress as large a discretion, as can well be imagined or required, so far as they relate to the subject under consideration. Hence, should a Territory become burdensome or unprofitable, it may be disposed of; should a new State be proposed, the citizens of which would make worthy members of our republic, whose constitution should be republican, and contain no provision inconsistent with, or repugnant to, those sacred principles of civil liberty, recognised and adopted in our bill of rights, and sanctioned by our constitution; Congress may admit them into the Union.

Should Congress consider slavery to be inconsistent with or inimical to republican institutions, and a new State should refuse to restrict its existence; or should a new State make no provision for that great safeguard and palladium of civil liberty, the right of trial by jury; should there be no provisions for protecting the weak from the violence of the strong, or the poor from the oppression of the rich; or should the admission of a new State be considered as detrimental to any of those now composing the Union; the blood and treasure of whose citizens have been expended in rearing and supporting the noble fabric of our constitution; all or any of these reasons would not simply justify, but demand their rejection from the Union.

The constitution does not give to any people or Territory, the power of claiming admission into the Union as a right; in the view of the committee, the only delegated power in regard to this subject, is exclusively vested in Congress, to be exercised at their discretion.

But whatever may be the discretionary power of Congress, as to the admission of new States, and of making all needful rules and regulations respecting its Territories; it has been said, it cannot be exercised in relation to the people of Missouri, in consequence of the provisions contained in the treaty and cession of Louisiana. The third article of that treaty provides that, "the inhabitants of the ceded Territory shall be incorporated in the Union of the United States, and admitted as soon as possible, according to the principles of the federal constitution, to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States; and in the mean time, they shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, their property, and the religion which they profess." Upon this objection your committee observe, that treaties like other contracts, are to be construed and performed according

to the true intent and meaning of the agreement, and the respective powers of the contracting parties. In regard to this particular question, it is not unfair to presume, that it never constituted a subject of deliberation with either party.

It is a matter of course, in treaties of cession, to provide for the protection of the inhabitants of the ceded country, in their property, persons and religion, and that they shall be admitted to the enjoyment of the laws and privileges of the country, to which they are ceded. But these customary clauses are not meant to abridge or destroy the right of the government, to make such needful rules and regulations, and to enact such laws respecting the ceded Territory and its inhabitants, as are within the general scope of their constitutional powers. It is not pretended that the French government, in making this treaty, meant to stipulate for any particular form of government or code of laws, under which the ceded Territory was to be held or governed. It was just and proper on their part, to provide, that the inhabitants of the ceded Territory should not be left without the pale of a government, by which they might be protected.

But had it been required of the government of France, to specify whether it was intended by those words, "the inhabitants of the ceded Territory shall be incorporated into the Union of the United States, and admitted as soon as possible, according to the principles of the federal constitution, to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States," to deprive Congress of the power of restricting slavery; the obvious and natural reply in the opinion of your committee would have been, that this was a subject of future legislation, to be regulated and determined according to the principles of the federal constitution. Their language would have been, "we intend to provide for the present inhabitants of the Territory, the protection of your laws, and the benefit of becoming members of your republic, in the same manner, that they have been enjoyed by the inhabitants of other Territories belonging to the United States, and which have been admitted into the Union." *It is not provided that the inhabitants of the ceded Territory, are to be admitted according to their own will or pleasure, and to enjoy the immunities and advantages of citizens of the United States, according to their own caprice, or under such conditions as they may require; but they are to be incorporated into the Union of the United States, and admitted*

as soon as possible, according to the principles of the federal constitution.

What, it will be then asked, are the principles of the federal constitution applicable to this subject? Your committee have already shown, that one provision in the constitution is, that Congress have the power to make all needful rules and regulations respecting the Territory of the United States, which includes a right to restrict slavery, and that in the exercise of this power, slavery was abolished in the Territory north-west of the Ohio; that they have the power also to prohibit the migration and importation of slaves, and the power of admitting new States at their discretion. And if Congress may admit new States according to its discretion, it most clearly appears, that the stipulation in the treaty, "the inhabitants of the ceded Territory should be incorporated into the Union," is subject to the control and exercise of this discretionary power. The contracting parties, both apprised of these constitutional powers in Congress, knowing that they could not be limited or destroyed by a treaty, have therefore made the admission of the ceded Territory dependent on, and their incorporation into the Union, to be according to, the principles of the federal constitution. Your committee are therefore of the opinion, that the treaty does not, nor was it intended by the contracting parties that it should, contain any provision, inconsistent with, or derogatory to, the power that Congress possess over this subject under the constitution.

It is further to be observed, that by the treaty, the inhabitants of the ceded Territory are to be admitted to the enjoyment of all the privileges, advantages, and immunities of citizens of the United States. In the character of citizens of the United States, as members of the federal compact, slaves cannot be held. They can be held only by citizens of some particular States, deriving their power solely from the State government. On this point of distinction between citizens of the United States, and citizens of particular States, your committee can perceive no ground for contrariety of opinion. For it has been most strenuously contended by the opponents of restriction, that the States have reserved to themselves, the exclusive power of continuing or abolishing the rights and advantages of its citizens to be derived from the holding of slaves, and that the constitution confers no authority on Congress to legislate upon the subject, or in any manner to affect this species of property. If the constitu-

tion confer no power Congress can impart no right to citizens of the United States in regard to slavery, and it would therefore be absurd to say, that being admitted to all the rights, advantages, and immunities of citizens of the United States in the language of the treaty, would give to the inhabitants of the ceded Territory the right of holding slaves. But, it is to be remarked, that the treaty only stipulates for the admission of the inhabitants of the ceded Territory, according to the principles of the federal constitution. Congress, therefore, is the tribunal to decide what are those principles, and, whatever may be the wishes or opinions of the French government, or of the inhabitants of the ceded Territory upon this subject, they are bound in good faith to submit to, and abide by this decision. This is the tribunal established by the constitution, to decide whether a new State may be admitted into the union. In regard to this subject, the jurisdiction of this tribunal is exclusive and paramount; and so far as the treaty making power should attempt to control, or prescribe terms or conditions to the full exercise of this jurisdiction, its acts would be nugatory and unconstitutional. Your committee, however, do not admit the idea, that in the present case the provisions of the treaty are, in any respect, inconsistent with the full and unqualified exercise, of the power which Congress possess over the subject.

But it may be asked, what principles are to be found in the federal constitution, upon which the inhabitants of the ceded Territory can claim a right, to the unmitigated and unrestricted power, of holding their coloured population in perpetual bondage? In the first clause of the constitution, its principles and views are most fully developed, and forcibly expressed. "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America." Is it, we demand, to establish justice, that they insist upon the right, not merely to hold those who were slaves upon the cession of the territory, but to entail slavery upon their posterity, without the power or even the hope of melioration?

Is it to ensure domestic tranquillity, that they wish to create a population, which, in numbers and physical force must have greatly the preponderance, and who are not bound to the State

or their masters by any sense of moral obligation, the ties of affection, or the feelings of gratitude?

Upon this subject we will not direct their attention to the contemplation of scenes from which the heart recoils with horror; but we ask them to inquire of the citizens of those States where slavery exists in its mildest forms, from whence arise their most anxious thoughts and melancholy forebodings? Is it to promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to themselves and their posterity, that they wish to perpetuate and extend a species of servitude, that directly promotes luxury and indolence, and whose consequences are so inimical to those simple habits of life, that equality of condition, and those humble virtues without which republics cannot exist? Your committee therefore conclude, that the principles of the federal constitution do not comport with the existence of slavery, but are opposed to its exercise in whatever form or manner it can be practised.

On motion resolved, that a committee of arrangement be appointed to take into consideration the different subjects contained in those communications, and to propose to the Convention, such business as they may deem proper to engage its attention.

William Rawle, Reuben Leggett, Joseph Bringhurst, John Wales and Jonas Preston, were appointed that committee.

On motion resolved, that a committee be appointed to examine the accounts of the treasurer to the late Convention, to receive from him the monies and documents appertaining to the Convention, and to deliver them, with the papers and vouchers, into the hands of the present treasurer. Thomas Shipley and Edwin A. Atlee, were appointed for that purpose.

The president communicated to the Convention the copy of a letter addressed to the emperor of Russia, by Richard Peters, Jun. as president of the American Convention, &c. also a letter from William Dillwyn, directed to Richard Peters, Jun., and another from Thomas Clarkson, directed to Richard Peters, Jun. Esquire, Chairman of the Convention, &c. all of which, as they related to subjects highly interesting, were referred to the committee of arrangement.

Adjourned to six o'clock to-morrow evening.

October 6th, six o'clock P. M. The members of the Convention met pursuant to adjournment, and proceeded to business.

The following delegates, appeared and took their seats: Hugh McCormick, James Palmer, from New York; David Paul Brown, and the Rev. George Boyd, from Pennsylvania.

The following communications from the Abolition Societies in Kentucky and Ohio, that from the latter being presented by Thomas H. Genin, its delegate, who appeared and took his seat, were read, and on motion, referred to the committee of arrangement.

"The Kentucky Abolition Society,"

To the American Convention for promoting the abolition of slavery, to be assembled in Philadelphia on the first Tuesday in October, 1819, wish light, energy, unanimity and success to their benevolent designs, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

We are happy to find that you, and the auxiliary societies which form your body, are making unceasing exertions to effectuate the deliverance of that class of our fellow beings, who have for ages been in a state of degradation, unpitied by thousands;—we hope it is the work of God, and that the time of their salvation is at hand. We hope also, that in his all-wise providence and grace, he will teach you, and all parties concerned in the great and good cause, to pursue such a course as may meet with his divine approbation:—and make even its enemies in all their intrigues, finally promote the end in view. And though it is the duty of all engaged in this work, to use all lawful means in their power to forward it, we hope we shall not forget or neglect, to unite our fervent prayers to Almighty God, through Christ, for a blessing on our feeble endeavours; and that he will be pleased to awaken the attention of oppressors, to "discern the signs of the times," and consider what they are about.

The contiguity of this State to the river Ohio, gives wicked traders and kidnappers favourable opportunities of practising their frauds and cruelties; for whenever coloured people are brought here (as great numbers are) from Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, &c. to evade the law of this commonwealth, which prohibits slaves being imported for speculation, the trans-

porters have them entered, as being brought in for their own private use, or that they fell to them by heirship, or as movers, they brought them along as their own family, in which cases the law allows of their importation: but if it should so turn out (as it frequently does) that any of those coloured people are free, or have a right to their liberty by the laws of the State from which they came, on such information taking wind, they send them down the river immediately, before any thing can be effectually done to prevent it: and we have not as yet been happy enough, to get a law passed by our legislature, really to put a stop to this nefarious practice.

So strong are the prejudices of slave-holders in this State, that but few of their masters can be prevailed on to learn their young slaves so much, as to read the Holy Scriptures; and what few would learn them to read, and if a Teacher would learn them gratis, they would not be admitted into a school among white children. As for the free coloured people among us who have families of children, they live in so detached a situation, that the poor creatures have but little opportunity of getting them educated, even where they possess the means; and we as a society, for want of resources, have as yet formed no establishment to aid them in this important matter. Some of us have it in contemplation, to forward a resolution at our next annual meeting, to encourage and set up Sunday Schools, in neighbourhoods where it may be admissible by their owners, for the partial education of young slaves, hoping it may have a good tendency.

We are highly gratified to find, that the Convention is in the habit of circulating the minutes of their proceedings, and publications of importance, to a large extent in our country; we are well convinced that it will tend to spread information, remove prejudices, awaken attention and keep the interesting subject in motion, and be attended with many salutary effects; in which, we as an infant society, are grateful witnesses.

When we consider the contracted, degraded situation of the free coloured inhabitants of these United States, we cannot but have favourable views and thoughts of the subject of colonization, if a suitable colony could be obtained, and necessary supplies and protection be afforded them: but it is a matter of very great importance, and therefore should not be gone into without due deliberation. We hope the blessed God, will ever-rule the af-

fair, in his all-wise providence, for his own glory and the good of all parties concerned!

The members of "The Kentucky Abolition Society," are spread over a large tract of country, and it is hardly practicable to assemble them more than once a year, and though our last annual meeting was prior to the meeting of the Convention, and our messenger stood then appointed, the call did not reach here in time for his attendance, and the next meeting of the Convention, being before our annual meeting this year, we hope the former appointed delegate, under these circumstances, will cordially be received by you, as a delegate from "The Kentucky Abolition Society;" through whom we hope to receive interesting intelligence.

Signed in behalf of the whole, June 26th, 1819.

DAVID BARROW,
HENRY DARNALL.

The semi-annual meeting of delegates from the eight Local Union Humane Societies of the State of Ohio, being desirous of co-operating with the Abolition Societies, in the pursuit of objects so dear to the well-wishers of mankind, is pleased with the opportunity of being represented in their Convention, at a time when humanity has much in jeopardy, when the national legislature is pausing between vice and virtue, when even republican law-givers, are undecided whether slavery should not be sanctioned in their new States, although governments less friendly to liberty, are endeavouring to prevent the commerce of blood. The philanthropist will excuse the errors of ignorance, the impertinence of folly, and look with compassion upon the weakness of human nature; he smiles at the stupid simplicity of those who assert that the negroes should be slaves, because they are black or ignorant, though they had no command of their colour or education; but has he not cause to weep, if the same want of intelligence and common sense be discovered in the national councils? We have the pleasure to announce to the Convention, that the feeling against slavery is very general in our State; and we have reason to believe, that the constituents of those delegates to Congress, who countenanced the extension of slavery, do not merit the disgrace of that conduct; it has awakened the fears of the people against the call of a con-

vention to amend the constitution of the State; hearing principles so indicative of moral turpitude avowed by men who they had believed to be friendly to liberty, they are fearful of trusting themselves, and will probably choose to bear with the imperfections of the present constitution, rather than risk it with men whose liability to err is certain, and whose honesty is doubtful. When we contrast the strength of interest with the weakness of virtue; with regard to their government of human conduct, we have no reason to be surprised that the latter has not been more successful, but consolation may be reaped from the fact, that in combats between truth and falsehood, though the latter be supported by power, the former will finally triumph; and that the increase of knowledge and piety is the increase of liberty and justice. We have seen the condition of the people of colour greatly improved in some States, where avarice tempted less to injustice, by the appointment of a future period when slavery should cease; and since many influential men in the southern States, seem to dread the difficulties in which slavery is involving their country; perhaps these States may at no distant period appoint a time after which those negroes that come into the world, shall be free at a certain age, and be instructed in the duties of civil life.

A considerable portion of our white population, have much to learn in despite of prejudice and natural weakness of mind, before they know themselves, or are capable of acting consistent with the character of Christians, or patriots, or can be instrumental in hastening the consummation of the Christian plan, when all mankind shall unite in the love of God and each other.

It is doubtful whether the expense of colonizing the blacks at any place, might not be appropriated more advantageously for humanity: those that are now free, are in as good a country as any to which they could be transported; if it be expected that the slave holders will manumit their slaves that are useful, to be colonized, the expectation must be founded upon the supposition that man will act as he ought to and not as he has done; interest will not cease to influence human conduct; if such only are manumitted as are unuseful to the master, few will be manumitted that are useful to themselves; no certain decrease of oppression then would be obtained by colonization, but a certain loss of money and the ruin of means, that might be more usefully employed.

It is our opinion that much might be done in the pulpit for the cause in which we are engaged, for it is the cause of religion; we therefore suggest to the Convention whether it would not be proper to invite the clergy without regard to the denominations to which they belong, to a participation in our endeavours.

The local societies have respectively done something towards liberating those improperly held in bondage; some are engaged in considerable lawsuits in relation thereto: it was deemed necessary to form an abridgment of the laws in relation to slaves, that each member might be furnished with a director in urgent cases; this work has been partially executed.

Signed in behalf of the Society, by
THOMAS H. GENIN, President.

At a semi-annual meeting of the Union Humane Society, held at Mount Pleasant, 7th mo. 12th, 1819.

On motion resolved, That two delegates be appointed to attend the ensuing meeting of the American Convention "for promoting the abolition of slavery and improving the condition of the African race," and that Thomas H. Genin and Henry Crew be said delegates.

Extracted from the minutes, by

HENRY CREW, Secretary.

The Committee of Arrangement made the following report.

The Committee of arrangement beg leave to report, that they have attentively considered the several communications and matters referred to them, and the interesting and important subjects contained therein.

Independent of what may be considered matter of information only, some parts of which are as gratifying to humanity, as some are painful and afflictive, the committee has turned its attention to those subjects on which they apprehend the Convention will have to determine, what active measures ought at present to be taken.

The inhuman traffic in slaves; the colonization of free blacks or coloured people in some part of our own territory, or the making of an arrangement with the government of Hayti for their safe and liberal reception; the continuance of the system

of slavery within the very seat of national legislation; the power of Congress to tolerate slavery in the Territories that have been acquired since the formation of our constitution, and in new States that may hereafter be formed of those Territories or any part of them; the atrocious crime of kidnapping; the formation of Abolition Societies in the southern States, as a means of promoting gradual emancipation, and protecting sufferers from unmerited bondage; and the adoption of an exclusive and efficient plan for the instruction of the young people of colour, form the prominent objects to which, in the opinion of the committee, it would be expedient to advise the present attention of the Convention. Some of these subjects will be found on consideration, to present a variety of aspects, on which it will be most convenient not to appoint special committees, till they have been deliberately considered by the Convention. The following resolutions which are respectfully submitted, will present in the most concise form the views of the committee.

1. Resolved, That the causes of the continuance of the traffic in slaves, and the possibility of putting a total end to it, be considered by the Convention in a committee of the whole.

2. Resolved, That the propriety and practicability of establishing settlements of free persons of colour, within lands belonging to the United States, or of procuring for them a safe and liberal reception in the island of Hayti, or elsewhere, be considered by the Convention in a committee of the whole.

3. Resolved, That the continuance of a system of slavery within the district of Columbia, the subject of the exclusive legislation of Congress, is in the opinion of this Convention required or justified by no article of the constitution, and is repugnant alike to the principles of right, the sound policy, and the public character of the nation. And that a committee be appointed to renew the application heretofore made to Congress on this subject.

4. Resolved, That the constitutional power of the Congress of the United States, to enact or to tolerate slavery within that Territory, which formed no part of the national domain at the time of the adoption of the present constitution, and the expediency of sending a committee or delegation to attend the next session of Congress, with a remonstrance against the toleration of slavery in any of the Territories of the United States, or new States that may be formed, be considered by the Convention in a committee of the whole.

5. Resolved, That it be referred to a committee, to consider and report, whether any more effective measures can be recommended for securing persons of colour from being forcibly and fraudulently removed from their places of residence into other States.

6. Resolved, That a committee be appointed to prepare an address to some of the inhabitants of those States, in which no Societies for promoting the abolition of slavery at present exist, recommending the early formation of such Societies.

7. Resolved, That a committee be appointed to consider and report on the best means of affording literary, moral and mechanical instruction to people of colour.

By order of the Committee.

W. RAWLE, Chairman.

On motion resolved, That the third resolution contained in the report of the committee of arrangement, be adopted by the Convention; and Jonas Preston, John Wales and James Palmer were appointed the committee on that resolution.

The fifth resolution was, on motion, referred to Joseph Bringhurst, Richard C. Wood, and William Wright.

The sixth resolution was referred to Evan Lewis, Reuben Leggett and Thomas H. Genin.

The seventh resolution was referred to George Boyd, Thomas Shipley, David Paul Brown, Robert F. Mott and Eli Hilles.

On motion resolved, that the subjects mentioned in the first, second and fourth resolutions of the report, be considered in committee of the whole, as proposed by the committee of arrangement.

The following report was received from the acting committee of the Convention.

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

The acting committee believing that a report from them would be acceptable, exhibiting a condensed view of their transactions since the last session of the Convention, respectfully report, that in performance of the duties enjoined them by the Convention, they have had 700 copies of the minutes, 100 copies of the Constitution, 150 copies of the circular address, and 200 copies of the address to the free people of colour, printed and distributed in the requisite proportion, to the different So-

cieties, excepting those intended for Tennessee, North Carolina and Ohio, which remain to be forwarded; no suitable opportunity having yet occurred. They have also forwarded to individuals in the different slave-holding States, a circular letter, requesting information respecting the situation of slaves and the free people of colour, a copy of which is herewith laid before you; although they have received some valuable information, they regret exceedingly that their endeavours have been crowned with but partial success, only two answers having been received, viz. from Georgia and Tennessee, which are herewith submitted. They have the satisfaction to report that Richard C. Wood, Esq., a member of the Pennsylvania Society, has undertaken to form a digest of the laws of the United States, and the different States on the subject of slavery. At the suggestion of the New York Society, they have addressed a letter to a number of influential persons in Baltimore, to encourage them to form a Society in that city to promote the abolition of slavery, but they have not heard of any attempt to form such Society. Although their efforts to promote the cause of abolition have not been yet as successful as they could have wished, they however believe their endeavours have not been wholly lost, but that further time will evince their utility. In discharging the expenses of printing, &c. the committee have drawn upon the Treasury for 128 dollars, 68 cents, which they regret to say has exhausted the funds in the hands of the Treasurer. The committee respectfully suggest to the Convention the propriety of taking some further measures to increase the funds of the Convention, as the stock of the Philadelphia Bank has produced no dividend for the last six months.

On behalf of the committee.

BENJAMIN TUCKER, *Chairman.*

Attest, THOMAS SHIPLEY, *Secretary.*

THE CIRCULAR ADDRESS.

At a special meeting of the American Convention for promoting the abolition of slavery and improving the condition of the African race, assembled at Philadelphia on the 10th day of December 1818, it was resolved, among other things, "That the acting committee be instructed to collect such facts as may be in their power to obtain, in relation to the condition of people

of colour in the slave-holding States; also in relation to the practice of kidnapping, and report thereon at the next session of the Convention.

Countenanced by the laws of the country, it is well known that thousands of these our fellow beings are held, as personal property, in a state of abject hereditary slavery, and although the national legislature, from the exalted motives of benevolence and humanity, have abolished the African slave-trade, the great work of general emancipation and the final extinction of slavery remains yet to be accomplished. In this great field there is promise of an abundant harvest, which would be highly honourable to the national character, grateful to the feelings of philanthropists, and congenial with the divine principles of the gospel: but alas! in this field, the labourers are comparatively few.

Notwithstanding the prospect of ultimate success may be so remote, as to discourage the efforts of the most persevering, the Convention, from a retrospect of the progress heretofore made by the advocates of emancipation, are induced to believe that the good cause may be still advanced, and under this impression, are desirous of exerting all the means within their power to aid the interesting concern.

In entering upon the duty above assigned to them, the committee do not feel themselves called upon to advocate, in this communication, the rights of these oppressed people to personal liberty, the enjoyment of which they believe to be naturally inherent and unalienable; neither do they wish in the inquiries they are about to make, to wound the feelings of any one in the slightest degree, who may unfortunately be a slave-holder. So-llicitous only to discharge with fidelity the important trust committed to them, they have taken the liberty respectfully to request answers to the several questions herewith submitted, which will be gratefully received by them.

QUESTIONS.

1st. What is the general treatment of slaves in your State; and are any of them used with peculiar rigour and severity?

2d. What are the punishments inflicted for offences; and what are the encouragements for industry and orderly deportment?

3d. Are they suitably clothed, and what is their allowance of food?

4th. What part of their time is granted for recreation and for their own emolument; and how much land is allowed them, if any, to cultivate for themselves?

5th. Are they encouraged or permitted to attend places of public worship, and under what restrictions?

6th. Are masters restrained by law from inflicting severe and cruel punishments, and are those laws enforced?

7th. Are there any instances of females being so severely treated, when in a state of pregnancy, as to cause abortion or miscarriage?

8th. In the sale of slaves, is there any respect paid to the near connexion of husband and wife, parent and child?

9th. Are they encouraged to marry and take care of their children; or is the sexual intercourse indiscriminate; and are any legal punishments inflicted for the crimes of fornication and adultery?

10th. At what age are children employed in the fields, and are they provided with suitable clothes from their birth, or do they run nearly naked; and are any of them instructed in school learning?

11th. What disposition exists respecting the manumission of slaves, and do the laws admit or prohibit it?

12th. Does any particular disease appear to prevail among them, which may be justly attributed to too severe labour, rigorous treatment, or insufficient or improper food; and are they furnished with medical aid, when sick?

Of Free Coloured People.

1st. What is the general character and condition of free people of colour; how is their liberty secured; are habits of industry encouraged and employment afforded them?

2d. Are any of them mechanics; do they hold real property, or are they prohibited therefrom by law?

3d. Are their children admitted to receive instruction in schools?

4th. Do instances occur of their being kidnapped, and are efforts made to recover them?

5th. How is the proposition of colonizing in Africa received by them?

Signed on behalf of the Committee,
BENJAMIN TUCKER, Chairman.

Attest, THOMAS SHIPLEY, Secretary.

The minutes of the acting committee were read and were satisfactory to the Convention.

Adjourned to ten o'clock to-morrow morning.

October 7th. The Convention met according to adjournment. A communication was received from the Manumission Society of Tennessee, and another from an individual in Georgia in answer to the subjoined queries contained in the circular issued by the acting committee of this Convention. The Convention was also favoured with a letter from T. Clarkson addressed to Roberts Vaux on the subject of colonization, all of which were laid upon the table.

Communications which had been received by the acting committee, from David Barrow, president of the Kentucky Abolition Society, and from James Jones, president of that of Tennessee, were directed to be laid upon the table.

The Convention took into consideration the report made by a committee of the Abolition Society of the State of Delaware, respecting the constitutional powers of Congress to prohibit or restrict slavery, within the Territories belonging to the United States, or new States on their admission into the federal compact, which was referred to a committee of the whole on the fourth resolution contained in the report of the committee of arrangement.

On the subjects contained in the first resolution reported by the committee of arrangement, the Convention resolved itself into a committee of the whole, William Wright in the chair. The committee after a partial consideration of the resolution, rose, reported progress and had leave to sit again.

The following resolution of the Pennsylvania Society, appropriating sixty dollars towards defraying the expenses of the present Convention, was received from their secretary.

At a meeting of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c., held 9th mo. 9th, 1819.

On motion resolved, That the sum of sixty dollars be, and the same is hereby appropriated, towards discharging the expenses of the ensuing session of the American Convention, for promoting the Abolition of Slavery and improving the condition of the African race.

From the Minutes.

B. WILLIAMS, Secretary.

On motion resolved, That any member of this Convention have liberty to invite, as a visiter during the session, any member of a Manumission or Abolition Society who may have been a delegate to a former Convention.

On motion resolved, That Evan Lewis, Jonas Preston, D. P. Brown, Robert F. Mott and John Wales be appointed a committee to draft an address to the different Abolition and Manumission Societies in the United States.

The Convention proceeded to the appointment of an acting committee, to transact any business which may occur during its recess, and the following persons were chosen:

New York.

Reuben Leggett
Hugh M'Cormick.

Delaware.

Joseph Bringhurst
Evan Lewis.

Columbia, (Penn.)

William Wright
Joseph Mifflin.

Ohio.

Thomas H. Genin
Henry Crew.

Pennsylvania.

Jonas Preston
Thomas Shipley
Richard C. Wood

Edwin A. Atlee
David Paul Brown.

Adjourned to nine o'clock to-morrow morning.

October 8th. The Convention met pursuant to adjournment. The committee on the fifth resolution made the following report, which was accepted.

"Your committee to whom was referred the fifth resolution proposed by the committee of arrangement, respectfully report, that they have attentively considered "whether any more effective measures can be recommended, for securing persons of colour from being forcibly or fraudulently removed from their places of residence into other States." On examination of this subject, they have learned that some of the States do not provide, by adequate penalties, against the forcible or clandestine transportation of free persons of colour, or of that class who are held to service for a term of years. In some cases the pecuniary penalty is not equal to one-fourth of the sum that is frequently paid, in many of the southern States, for a slave.

While high prices are given for slaves, the vicious will be tempted to disregard the claims of humanity, and violate the laws. It therefore becomes imperiously necessary to meet the temptation by increased penalties; and by such other safeguards as are within the limits of the legislative powers of the State governments. We propose that the Convention, in its circular address, call the attention of the Abolition and other Societies for protecting the legal rights of persons of colour, to this interesting subject.

"We also propose, that a committee of the learned legal characters, who are members of this Convention, be selected, and that they be instructed to draft a memorial, to be presented to the Congress of the United States, on the illicit domestic trade in persons of colour, and submit the same to a future sitting of this Convention."

The following persons were appointed to prepare the memorial to Congress, mentioned in the foregoing report: John Wales, Richard C. Wood, and David Paul Brown.

The Committee on the third resolution, reported the draft of a petition to Congress, which was directed to be laid on the table.

An address to the Sovereigns of Europe, on the subject of the slave trade, and a letter from Count Limonade, addressed to Hugh McCormick, chairman of the committee of the Manumission Society of New York, on the subject of colonizing the free people of colour in the Island of Hayti, having been laid before the Convention, were, with all other papers relating to the subject, on motion, referred to the committee of the whole, on the second resolution reported by the committee of arrangement.

The Convention went into a committee of the whole, William Wright in the chair, on the first resolution reported by the committee of arrangement.

The committee after some time rose, reported progress and had leave to sit again.

Thomas H. Genin, the delegate from Ohio, asked and received permission of absence for the remainder of the session.

Adjourned.

At half past three o'clock, P. M. the Convention again met, and proceeded to business.

The committee on the sixth resolution reported by the committee of arrangement, offered the following essay of an address, which was read and adopted.

To the Citizens of the State of *Friendly to the
Abolition of Slavery, and Improving the Condition of the
African Race.*

The American Convention, held at Philadelphia, and composed of delegates from abolition and manumission societies in different parts of the United States, among the various subjects which have come under their consideration, in relation to the freedom, the happiness, and prosperity of the people of colour; have been desirous of encouraging the formation of societies, where none at present exist, to aid in promoting the great and good cause which they have espoused. Under the influence of these sentiments, and for the purpose of combining, and concentrating the efforts of the friends of justice and humanity, for the attainment of one great object, the liberation, and the moral and religious improvement of this despised and degraded people, they take the liberty of suggesting for consideration, some of the objects to be attained by the formation of such societies as they are desirous of promoting.

When we take a view of the abject situation of a large portion of the coloured population of this country, the grievous oppression under which they have so long groaned, deprived of all the advantages of moral and intellectual cultivation, and even denied, in many places, a participation in the common advantages of religious communion; and when we contrast this with the blessings which we enjoy, in a country where civil and religious liberty are the legitimate inheritance of all, where every man sits down under his own vine, and under his own fig tree, and there is none that can make him afraid; no tyrant's hand to wrest from him the fruits of his honest industry; no ghostly phantom, in the form of a religious inquisitor, to extort from him a confession of his faith: the conviction must force itself upon the mind of every considerate person, that we owe this people a heavy debt, which we are religiously bound to use every reasonable effort to repay; we are bound to give to them every assistance in our power, to obtain from their oppressors a recognition of their rights; we are bound to extend

to them a portion of that knowledge and intellectual improvement, which our superior advantages have enabled us to acquire. There are, doubtless, some persons, in almost every district of our country, even in those States where slavery exists in its worst form, who feel the iniquity, and injustice, of holding their fellow creatures, in bondage and who are disposed to give relief to the subjects of this pernicious system, so far as the laws of their state, and their own ability, will permit. We recommend to such as these, wherever located, when sufficiently numerous, to organize themselves into a society, in which a uniformity of sentiment, and consistency of action may be attained.

The unconnected exertions of individuals cannot be so effectual, as the united efforts of associations. We conceive it to be of the highest importance to the furtherance of the cause, that every society, formed for promoting the abolition of slavery, and improving the condition of the African race, should direct its attention to the education of the people of colour. It is by intellectual cultivation, that these people must be raised from the condition of beasts of burden, to that of rational and useful members of the community.

The work of emancipation is but half accomplished when the bands of slavery are removed from the body; if the mind is not set free from the shackles of ignorance, and the reasoning faculties called into useful exercise, if the mental gloom is not in some measure dispelled by the light of knowledge, if the benighted African is still left to wander in the mazes of darkness and delusion, he will be poorly qualified to act a consistent part as a rational being in society, and will still be a slave to ignorance and error. The continued and persevering exertions on the part of some societies, who early engaged in the cause of emancipation, have been attended with great and important results; in most of the eastern and middle states, slavery has been abolished, or its final abolition has been secured by the enactment of laws for its termination at a future period. But it is a lamentable fact, that in this advanced period of the American republic, there still remain more than a million of our fellow creatures in bondage, for whose liberation, or that of their posterity, no legislative provision has been made. The Convention greatly desire to awaken the attention of those who feel the importance of this subject, to unite their exertions in

the form of Abolition Societies, to aid in promoting the great cause of emancipation throughout the United States, believing that the efforts of all who are engaged in this righteous cause, will be blessed, and that they who fulfil the gospel injunction, to "undo the heavy burdens, and let the oppressed go free," shall receive the reward assigned as the portion of the merciful and the peacemakers.

EVAN LEWIS,

Chairman of the Committee.

On motion, resolved, that the Convention adjourn, at the close of the sitting to-morrow morning, until the tenth day of next month, for the purpose of giving time for the committees which are or may be appointed on the important questions which have been before the Convention, to consider and mature the subjects submitted to them; and that the acting committee of the Convention be directed to have the minutes and such other documents as they may deem proper for publication, printed for the use of the Convention.

The Convention then resolved itself into a committee of the whole, William Wright in the chair, on the first resolution reported by the committee of arrangement.

The committee having had under consideration the subjects referred to them, rose and reported the following resolutions.

Resolved, that this Convention present an address to the President of the United States, earnestly soliciting his active co-operation in all the just and proper measures, which may be adopted by the powers of Europe to procure a total and immediate abolition of the slave trade.

Resolved, that a committee be appointed to enquire into the provisions of the laws of the United States, on the subject of the illicit introduction of slaves from foreign countries, who shall report at the adjourned session of the Convention whether any, and what additional provisions to those laws will be necessary or useful, and what measures ought to be adopted by this Convention in relation thereto.

Resolved, that the acting committee of this Convention be requested to prepare, and present in the name of this Convention, to be signed by the President thereof, a petition to be addressed to the legislatures of the slave holding States, soliciting the enactment of such laws as may effectually prohibit the intro-

duction of slaves into those States, from other States in the national confederacy, and from foreign countries; and by these and other means, to prevent the encouragements which now are given in those States to the practice of kidnapping, and the foreign and domestic slave trade.

On motion, the first resolution reported by the committee of the whole, was adopted, and I. M. Ely, Reuben Leggett and Theodore Dwight, were appointed to prepare the address mentioned in said resolution.

On motion the second was adopted, and Richard Peters, Jun., Richard C. Wood, D. P. Brown, John Wales, and I. M. Ely, were appointed the committee therein mentioned.

The third resolution was also adopted.

Adjourned to half past seven o'clock this evening.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment, and on motion, resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Jonas Preston in the chair, on the second resolution contained in the report of the committee of arrangement.

The committee of the whole, having had under consideration the second resolution, reported progress, and were discharged from further attention to the subject.

Resolved, that William Rawle, George Boyd, Hiram Ketchum, Richard Peters, Jun., and Joseph Bringhurst, be a committee to report facts, in relation to the subjects of the second resolution reported by the committee of arrangement, at the adjourned session of the Convention.

On motion, the Convention resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Jonas Preston in the chair, on the fourth resolution reported by the committee of arrangement.

The committee having had under consideration the fourth resolution, rose, reported progress, and had leave to sit again.

Adjourned to ten o'clock to-morrow morning.

October 9th. The Convention met, and proceeded to finish such business as required particular attention before the conclusion of the session.

The Convention again took into consideration the report of the committee on the third resolution of the committee of arrangement, when it was, on motion, resolved, that the petition to Congress on the subject of slavery in the District of Columbia, be referred to the committee who had reported it.

On motion, resolved, that the President of the Convention be requested to write to each delegate, transmitting a copy of the proceedings, and directing his attention to the principal subjects, which are expected to come under the consideration of the Convention at its adjourned session, and enjoining his attendance at that time.

On motion, resolved, that a committee be appointed to prepare an essay of an address to the people of the United States, on the subject of the abolition of slavery, and in relation to the condition of the free people of colour.

Hiram Ketchum, Robert F. Mott, and Hugh McCormick, were appointed that committee.

Adjourned, to meet at the city of Philadelphia, on the tenth day of November, at ten o'clock, A. M.

ROBERT F. MOTT, *Secretary.*

MINUTES.

AT a meeting of the American Convention, held in Philadelphia, pursuant to adjournment, November 10th, 1819.

The following delegates appeared and took their seats: from New York, Hiram Ketchum; Pennsylvania, Richard Peters, Jun. and Thomas Shipley; Delaware, Evan Lewis; Columbia, Pennsylvania, William Wright, Dr. Lukens and J. Mifflin; four societies being represented.

The President, Richard Peters, took the chair, and Thomas Shipley was appointed secretary protem. The Convention being informed that several other delegates would be in the city at noon:

On motion, the Convention adjourned till three o'clock, P. M.

November 10, three o'clock P. M. The Convention met pursuant to adjournment. The President being absent, Evan Lewis, Vice President, took the chair—

Jonas Preston, R. C. Wood, delegates for Pennsylvania; Joseph Bringhurst and Eli Hilles, delegates for Delaware, appeared and took their seats.

Jonas Preston, from the committee on the third resolution, reported by the committee of arrangement, made report, that the committee had made no progress since the last session, and that John Wells and James Palmer, two of the committee, were now absent.

On motion, resolved, That Hiram Ketchum and Joseph Bringhurst be appointed, to supply the vacancies occasioned by the absence of John Wells and James Palmer.

The acting committee made the following report.

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

The Acting Committee, respectfully report, that, agreeably to the instruction of the Convention, they have had printed

100 copies of the Minutes, one copy of which has been forwarded to each Delegate to the late Convention. They have received in the recess of the Convention, an interesting letter from the Managers of the Benevolent Society of Alexandria, giving an account of the origin, objects, and present situation of that Society, with a copy of their Constitution; and requesting the aid of other Societies, through their delegates, in the Convention, in an important law suit. At the receipt of this communication, the Pennsylvania Society being in session, that part of it which related to their request of assistance from other Societies, was laid before it, and an offer made by that Society of one of its most eminent counsel, to assist in prosecuting the suit in the Supreme Court of the United States. An answer to the queries proposed by the Convention, was also received from respectable citizens of Alexandria: the whole of which documents are respectfully submitted. Your committee have not yet prepared a Memorial to the Legislatures of the slave holding states, as instructed by the Convention: none of those Legislatures being yet in session, it was believed most eligible to delay the preparation of the Memorial.

On behalf of the committee,

EDWIN A. ATLEE, Chairman.

On motion, resolved, That the communication from Alexandria, be referred to the acting committee, to take such measures in relation to the matters therein contained, as said committee may deem proper.

Adjourned to six o'clock to-morrow evening.

November 11, six o'clock, P. M. The Convention met pursuant to adjournment. The president in the chair.

William Rawle, Joseph Parrish and David P. Brown, delegates for Pennsylvania, appeared and took their seats.

Jonas Preston from the committee on the third resolution reported by the committee of arrangement, reported an essay of a memorial to the Congress of the United States, which was read, and on motion was ordered to be laid upon the table.

On motion, the Convention resolved itself into a committee of the whole, upon the fourth resolution reported by the committee of arrangement, Jonas Preston in the chair.

On motion, the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That a Committee be appointed to prepare a remonstrance to Congress, against the enactment or toleration of slavery in any State, that may hereafter be formed or admitted into the Union.

On motion, the committee of the whole rose, and their chairman made report, that the committee had adopted the resolution last above mentioned.

On motion, the resolution reported by the committee of the whole, was adopted by the Convention. William Rawle, Joseph Bringhurst and Joseph Parrish, were appointed the committee last mentioned.

On motion, the Convention took into consideration the memorial reported by the committee on the third resolution reported by the committee of arrangement, when,

Resolved, That the consideration of said memorial be postponed to the next session of this Convention.

On motion, resolved, That by reason of the absence of the members composing the committee appointed to draft the memorial to the President of the United States, earnestly soliciting the active exercise of all the power vested in him by the constitution, in co-operation in all just and proper measures which may be adopted to procure a total and immediate abolition of the slave trade; the following members be substituted in the places of the absent members, Hiram Ketchum, Jonas Preston and Eli Hilles.

The Convention adjourned to ten o'clock to-morrow morning.

November 12, ten o'clock A. M. The Convention met pursuant to adjournment. The President in the chair.

On motion, resolved, That when this Convention adjourn, it adjourn to meet at six o'clock P. M.

On motion, resolved, That the acting committee be instructed to request of the New York Manumission Society, and the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, a contribution of 100 dollars each; of the Columbia Abolition Society, a contribution of 15 dollars, and of the Abolition Society of Delaware, 25 dollars, for the use of the Convention.

Adjourned to six P. M.

November 12, six o'clock P. M. The Convention met pursuant to adjournment. The President in the chair.

George Boyd, a delegate from Pennsylvania, appeared and took his seat.

The committee appointed in conformity with the second resolution adopted in the committee of the whole on the first resolution, reported by the Committee of Arrangement, reported in part, and requested to be discharged from the further consideration of the subject referred to them. When,

On motion, the said committee were accordingly discharged.

The Committee appointed to examine the accounts of the late Treasurer, made the following report, which was adopted.

The Committee appointed to examine the account of Joseph Lea, late treasurer to the Convention, respectfully report,

That they have attended to that duty, and after carefully comparing it with his vouchers, they find a balance due him, as per the annexed statement, of nine dollars forty-two cents, there are, however, in the hands of the Acting Committee, two unsatisfied orders from the Pennsylvania Society, for sixty dollars each, on their treasurer, towards defraying the expenses of the Convention.

Respectfully submitted,

EDWIN A. ATLEE,
THOMAS SHIPLEY.

| DR. | American Convention in account with Joseph Lea, Treasurer. | CR. | |
|---|--|---|--------|
| | D. C. | D. C. | |
| 1817. | | | |
| 9th Mo. 4. To Cash per order to E. Lewis, | 66 67 | 9th Mo. 4. By Cash of T. P. Cope, | 149 28 |
| 1818. | | | |
| 1st Mo. 16. To Cash order to P. Park, | 99 54 | 1818. | |
| 10th Mo. 19. To Cash Society Easton, To Cash Society Kentucky, | 50 00 | 7th Mo. 11. By Cash Dividend of Bank Stock, | 24 00 |
| To Cash Manc- ipation Intel- ligence, | 50 00 | 10th Mo. 19. By Cash Dividend of Bank Stock, By Cash of W. Dilwyn, | 24 00 |
| To Cash order to Hall and At- kinson, | 6 00 | By Cash Dividend of Bank Stock, Balance, | 100 00 |
| | 123 69 | | 24 00 |
| | | | 9 42 |
| | Dolls. 220 70 | Dolls. 220 70 | |

The committee to whom was referred the second resolution reported by the Committee of Arrangement, made the following report, which was adopted.

Report of the Committee, in relation to the subjects of the second Resolution of the Committee of Arrangement.

It is not intended to present to the consideration of the Convention, any observations inconsistent with the conclusions contained in the circular address to the abolition and manumission societies, which proceeded from it in December last.

The principles therein contained under the sanction of the Convention have gone forth. What impressions they may make on the respectable men who have advocated the establishment of a colony in Africa, or on the community at large, remains to be ascertained.

The duty imposed on this committee is to make a report in relation to the second resolution proposed by the committee of arrangement.

In respect to a settlement in the island of Hayti, the committee are not yet sufficiently possessed of facts, to enable them to make a full report. They have reason however to believe that a communication may be opened with the ruling powers of both parts of that country, by which satisfactory information may be speedily obtained, and submit the propriety of taking proper measures through the medium of the president for that purpose.

The first part of the proposition contained in the reference to this committee, appeared to call more immediately for its attention. If any plan of colonization is adopted, it is apprehended that one which would unite with the safety and comfort of the blacks an eventual benefit to the nation, must be admitted to be preferable.

It is obvious that the labour of those who may be removed to Africa, would be entirely lost to this country; and it appears, at least doubtful, whether their situations abroad would not be hazardous to their healths and lives; and whether they could be protected without an incalculable expense from the hostilities of the natives, and the depredations of the infamous dealers in slaves.

A removal into the interior of our own country, would be attended with none of these objections. The committee propose to consider the subject under the following divisions:

1. Is the measure practicable.
2. What are the moral and political objections to it.
3. The reasons in favour of it.

1. By the cession of Louisiana, the United States have become entitled to the exclusive purchase of immense tracts of

land westward of the Mississippi, and the Missouri. It appears expedient to the committee, that a certain number of acres should be appropriated by Government to the reception of such of the free blacks as may be willing to remove there. That a territorial or provincial form of government, calculated for the protection of property and personal right, should be established. That land should be granted to them without cost, and without power of alienation to white persons. That all involuntary servitude except on convictions for crimes, shall be for ever prohibited. That fugitive slaves shall not be harboured, and careful and specific regulations be adopted to prevent the introduction of improper persons. That the site of this establishment shall be as much secluded as possible from water communication. That agriculture and domestic manufactures shall be made the principal objects of attention. For a time, some protection on the part of the government of the United States, may be necessary; there can be no doubt that it will be afforded, if the present plan should be adopted.

This is the general outline. It is not possible to suggest the precise spot for the location of the colony; but, between the fortieth and forty-fourth degrees of latitude, and west of the Missouri, a suitable tract of fertile and healthy land might be selected beyond the line of white settlement, for half a century to come; and it is believed that the assent of the Indians, as well as their friendship and assistance, might be obtained without much trouble, or a great expense.

2. The objections which it is supposed would be used against this measure, may be thus classed:

1. The difficulty of obtaining the assent of the free blacks.
2. The expense.
3. The danger of erecting an independent power, which might hereafter prove formidable; if not to the United States generally, at least to the white settlements in the neighbourhood.
4. The encouragement it would afford to slaves to leave their masters, and join their countrymen in the woods.

To answer them in their order: 1st. It is admitted and professed by the friends of African colonization, that the migration is not intended to be forced. It is asserted that many free blacks to the Southward have expressed a willingness to embark for Africa; on the other hand, a respectful, calm, and sensible declaration, from those who reside in and near the city of Phi-

ladelphia, has lately been published, in which their decision against an African establishment is unequivocally pronounced; one strong objection contained in it, arises from the course of the ocean, which would render all communication with them so difficult; another is urged from the nature of the climate; a third from the probability that the Christian religion would be neglected, and in time forgotten.

None of these objections would apply to an American site.

It is therefore probable, that they would approve of this design, if they approved of any; and if they refuse to migrate at all, every plan must be relinquished.

2. The expense.

A former committee of this Convention calculated the expense of settling in Africa the present number of free blacks; to which calculation, a reference may be had. It is reasonable to believe that a settlement in our western lands would not cost one tenth of the amount.

3. It is supposed, that on the present plan, the foundation would be laid of an independent power, which can never be admitted, on equal terms, into our confederacy; and which may hereafter become a dangerous enemy, or a doubtful friend.

This, it must be confessed, is an alarming prospect; but, let it be compared with the political relations of the Indian tribes, who now use the same surface of territory, for the purpose of hunting.

Can any character, except that of condensation, be given to the former, which does not belong to the latter. The Indians are not contemplated as future members of our political confederacy. Their peace and friendship are endeavoured to be secured by treaties; their injustice repelled by force. Our political and public calculations are formed on their gradual improvement and civilization, on converting them into husbandmen, manufacturers, and Christians. No other views in respect to them, ought to be entertained, or have ever been publicly avowed.

On this plan, will the Africans be less desirable as neighbours, than the Indians; will they not, on the contrary, begin the course of improvement with advantages to which the latter are strangers? will they not carry with them a great portion of those civil arts, which they have acquired or observed among us? will they not carry with them an attachment to, and a sense of dependence upon us? will they not form a strong and useful

contrast to the proud and jealous spirit of independence, which actuates the Indians? and in time form a strong and useful barrier to the progress and effect of their hostile inclinations? If they cultivate with industry the arts of peace, and adhere to the principles and practice of our holy religion, will they not assist to extend that conversion of the heathen, which all pious men so fervently wish for.

Is there reason to apprehend that they will become too numerous and too powerful for our general safety? Their numbers and their power will never be subjects of terror to us, until we shall begin to use them ill. Their increased population may perhaps be in the same ratio with our own; it is not likely to be greater. The proportion is too small in our favour, to admit of uneasiness on that score. But, let it be enquired on the other hand, whether the increase is likely to be greater in such a colony than in the present scattered state of the same population, through the United States; and if the fears of some in respect to future consequences (in which however, the committee does not concur), are well founded, will it not, even in this point of view, be most conducive to the general welfare to have them thus concentrated in the interior? But it is conceived that such increase, under a wise and judicious organization, among themselves, and with good conduct on our part, will only increase the number of our friends and auxiliaries. This point is so far adverted to, only in its political and national tendencies and effects. In a moral point of view, if the colonization proposed, will increase the happiness of those removed to it, ought the number of those who will partake of the benefit, to form an objection. In its religious aspect, ought we to refuse an assent to a plan by which the number of Christian believers is likely to be augmented. To conclude, it appears to the committee, that after the establishment is properly formed, it will rest with ourselves whether we have there a numerous body of friends, or a numerous body of enemies; for it never can be the interest of those men to cast off the aid, protection, and countenance of the United States.

The last enumerated objection, is one on which the committee feels a difficulty not resulting from the nature of the subject itself, but from the different arguments which have been urged by the Colonization Society. To those who are opposed to the continuance of slavery, colonization abroad is presented as a scheme strongly conducive to gradual emancipation;

o the slave-holder it is affirmed that the removal of the free blacks will render their slaves "more obedient, faithful, honest and useful." And it is attempted to reconcile these views, by asking whether it constitutes a substantial objection to this "effort to enlarge the stock of human happiness," that "the most sordid and degrading, as well as the most benevolent and exalted sentiments of the heart should be enlisted in its favour."

So far as any plan of colonization in this or any other country, may have even a remote tendency to rivet the unhallowed fetters of the slave, this Convention must withhold its concurrence; the principles of the Societies for promoting the abolition of slavery, must be utterly abandoned, before a measure can be recommended to them, by its production of an effect completely at variance with their constitutions, and the principles of their members individually. And if this is to be considered as being the natural consequence of the colonization, the Convention seems to be bound to dismiss the subject altogether. But in its more delightful and benevolent aspect—the incentive to individual emancipation, it may be pursued with a hope, it is trusted, not wholly illusive. If this proves to be the effect of colonization, it is entitled to the warmest aid in the power of the Convention to bestow. It is perfectly consistent with this part of its character, to abstain from every course that, in its necessary legal operation, may be found at variance with the supposed rights of the slave-holders: however the legal toleration of slavery may be deplored, the societies represented in the Convention, have never encouraged the slave to resist the claims, or abscond from the service of his master. What they have uniformly abstained from, in detail, they will not attempt in the gross. It is no part of the design of an interior colony, to create an asylum for fugitives from labour, or from guilt.

Prohibitions, positive and severe, must be established, and may, it is conceived, be enforced. The distance from the Southern States might be rendered as great as possible, and a pledge of the good faith of the new colonists, might easily be obtained, to co-operate with such measures of prevention as would render the evil almost impossible.

Having thus endeavoured to obviate the objections which have occurred, it may not be deemed an improper conclusion of this report, to observe, that there is more probability of re-

taining in such a colony, the due observance of moral and religious principle, than either of the other two plans would afford.

It is certainly most desirable to unite, with the hope and the effort of disseminating the knowledge of Jesus Christ among infidels, a due attention to the preservation of that knowledge among the colonists themselves. It is indeed the most important, because, independent of their own welfare, it is only by the preservation of the Christian religion among them, that they can be rendered either teachers or examples to others. Now, within our own country, it is obvious that we shall have a stronger hold on them, by the facility with which pious missionaries will be able to communicate with them; and by the progress in their own improvement, on which we may reasonably calculate. But, in Africa, surrounded by the most degrading superstition, remote from religious communications, moulderling in point of numbers from the unhealthiness of the climate, the hostilities of the natives, and the depredations of slave-dealers; there must be less hope of their continuance in the faith of the gospel, and still less of their being able to impart it to others.

It may, however, be objected that the Indian superstitions are as gross, and obstinate as those of the Africans; and that blacks are considered, even by the Indians, as an inferior class: from which, it is not probable that they would be willing to receive instruction.

The former of these positions cannot be contradicted; and which of the two classes would be most tenacious of their errors, it is impossible to decide. It may, however, be justly observed, that so far as we are informed, there is more looseness in the religion of erratic tribes, and more system and cohesion in the African superstitions; and if this should be found to be the case, the probability of conversion would be greater with the former.

In respect to the opinions supposed to be entertained by the Indians, of the inferiority of negroes, we are to remember, that this prejudice has been taught to them by ourselves. If, in their predatory incursions on our borders, they have found the black man regarded by us but as a subject of property—as a subject of property, they have carried him away.

If we exhibit them collectively, as national and respected beings, the Indians will learn to receive them with the same sensations;—and if, as is confidently hoped, the regularity and propriety of their conduct shall conciliate the friendship of the neighbouring tribes; those tribes will gradually study, approve, and adopt their arts, their comforts, and their religion.

But the committee does not hesitate to say, that the effect of such a colony on the surrounding people, is not of the same importance; at least in this aspect, as its effect upon the colonists themselves. Wherever it may be placed, our first duty is to provide that their peace and happiness, their moral system, their political rights, and their adhesion to our religion, should be enforced and secured; and from every view that has yet been taken of the subject, the committee believes that these objects may be effectually secured by planting the colony in the interior of America.

The committee beg leave to add, that, in their opinion, the subject is too momentous for an immediate decision; and that they do not submit any resolutions to the Convention, partly because it does not appear to come within the sphere of their appointment, and partly because it appears to them inexpedient, till future information shall be obtained, that the Convention should adopt any measures in relation thereto.

On behalf of the Committee,

WILLIAM RAWLE, Chairman.

The committee appointed in pursuance of the first resolution adopted by the committee of the whole, upon the first resolution reported by the Committee of Arrangement, made the following report of an address which was adopted. And,

On motion, it was ordered that the said address be signed by the President of this Convention, and forwarded to the President of the United States.

To his Excellency, James Monroe, President of the United States.

The American Convention, composed of Delegates from Societies organized in different sections of the United States, to promote the Abolition of Slavery, and improve the condition of the African race, deem it their duty to address your Excellency on a subject, which they in common with yourself, and every other friend to freedom and humanity, have near at heart; the universal abolition of the Slave trade.

This Convention contemplate, with the liveliest emotions of gratitude, the exertions which, within a few years, have been made by most nations of Christendom to abolish the traffic in human flesh;—that traffic which had been so long their igno-

miny and shame. While they have much reason to regret that before our nation became independent, the evil of slavery had taken such deep root in our country, that it was impracticable for the new republic at once to extend to the descendants of Africa those privileges which the fathers of our liberty had declared to be the birth right of "all men;" yet they rejoice that the legislature of our country embraced an early opportunity to put a termination to the slave trade.

Although our national acts on this subject are worthy of all praise, yet the fact must be well known to your Excellency, that much remains to be done ere the slave trade is declared by all nations to be an offence against their morals and laws. The Convention, therefore, take the liberty to solicit the active exercise of all the power vested in your Excellency by the constitution, in co-operation in all just and proper measures which may be adopted by the powers of Europe, to procure a total and immediate abolition of the slave trade.

The Convention are not aware that there exists a necessity of calling the attention of your Excellency to this subject. They have, however, deemed it their duty not to let their present sessions pass, without communicating to you that they and their constituents respectfully anticipate that all opportunities which your official station, as the Executive head of a Free People, may afford, will be improved to further the object here suggested.

On behalf of the Committee.

HIRAM KETCHUM.

The committee to whom was referred the seventh resolution, reported by the Committee of Arrangement, made the following report.

The committee to whom was referred the seventh resolution report, that your committee in taking into consideration the present situation of the people of colour in the United States, deprived of all those incentives to correct and honourable conduct, which the feelings of equality, and eligibility to stations of profit and honour, so powerfully produce upon mankind, have become perfectly satisfied, that in order to afford them effectual instruction in a literary, moral, or mechanical point of view, it is essentially necessary that very general and extensive measures should be adopted by the friends of that injured and degraded class of society. As the prejudices of the white popula-

tion preclude them from the advantages of social intercourse or reciprocal improvement, except amongst themselves; and as the minds of men are more easily debased by example than exalted by precept; it is evident, that unless their instruction be general, from the nature of their association, it can never be lasting, inasmuch as the ignorance and vice of the many, will triumph over the knowledge and virtue of the few. A community of knowledge and virtue is their surest protection; it operates as a sort of social compact upon the numerous individuals who constitute it; and it becomes the interest of every one to contribute to the general treasure, as it is the fountain of individual wealth and happiness.

Your committee therefore respectfully suggest to the Convention, the propriety of representing to slave holders generally throughout the United States, the almost incalculable injury to society inevitably accruing from their present rigorous treatment of these oppressed people, particularly in denying them the means of instruction, and separating near connexions, by selling parents or children to a distant state; thus embittering the little happiness that a slave is capable of enjoying; and when any of these unhappy beings escape from their iron servitude, or become manumitted by the death bed repentance of their masters, the habits of guilt they have acquired in slavery render them a burden to society, and contaminators of their more innocent brethren. But, if an exhibition of these wrongs will not deter them from a continuance in their present course, and the claims of society are despised, let them be once more warned against driving this hapless race to desperation, and let their selfishness teach them a salutary lesson of forbearance. In vain will our societies for distributing the holy scriptures have been instituted, in vain will the word of inspiration be disseminated throughout the universe; if the hearts of those beings, for whose temporal and eternal welfare the charitable thus labour, are wantonly locked up in slavery, in ignorance and in guilt: "The light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not."

With respect to those branches of education that are properly literary, we are of opinion, that much good may be derived by people of colour, from the establishment of Sunday or first day schools; and we would also earnestly recommend, that such manumission societies whose funds will admit of it, should have one or more daily schools under their immediate care and

control, for the free instruction of such as are indigent. Your committee also beg leave to call your attention to the provisions of public schools by the state government, for the children of the poor; the blacks are entitled to the benefits of these provisions, and assuredly ought not to be deprived of them.

In regard to the improvement of their morals, your committee believe that this will be best effected by a more general notice being taken of their conduct; they suggest the propriety of each manumission society appointing a committee of two or three persons to address them, when convened for that purpose, twice or thrice a year, and disseminating among them the holy scriptures and religious tracts: those of them who conduct themselves well, should be particularly noticed and spoken of, that a laudable ambition may be excited, and their rank in society be somewhat raised; this in the opinion of your committee will be a powerful auxiliary, in the effectuation of our object.

As it relates to mechanical instruction, almost insuperable difficulties present themselves in many parts of the country, from the pride and deep rooted prejudices of society. Perhaps no more effectual method can be adopted, than that of encouraging them ourselves, and recommending them to our friends. A general disposition on our part to favour those mechanics, who shall employ coloured people, or receive them as apprentices; will probably be the surest, if not the only mode of introducing amongst them a mechanical course of instruction.

Respectfully submitted.

GEORGE BOYD,
ELI HILLES,
D. P. BROWN,
THOMAS SHIPLEY.

The committee appointed to prepare a remonstrance to Congress, against the enactment or toleration of slavery in any new state, made the following report, which was adopted and directed to be signed by the President of the Convention, and presented to Congress.

The Memorial and Remonstrance of the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African Race, held at Philadelphia, on the fifth of October, and the tenth of November, 1819,

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH,

That strongly impressed with the apprehensions of the evil consequences which inevitably must result to the United States by enlarging the sphere and protracting the duration of domestic slavery, your Memorialists deem it their duty respectfully to present this remonstrance against the admission into the Union of any new States which may be hereafter formed, unless on the conditions that the further introduction of slaves therein be prohibited, and that the duration of slavery therein be confined to those who shall be held in such bondage at the time of their admission.

Principles of plain and acknowledged justice may sometimes have been suspended or overruled, from a belief of State necessity. In the origin of political associations, mutual concessions are sometimes required, and an overruling public urgency suggests, while it regrets, the adoption of measures, the danger of which is even partially anticipated.

Of this nature was the toleration of slavery in the formation of our present constitution.

But when no political urgency exists, when no necessary concession to circumstances is required, when the general legislature has the power to lay down the principles of admission into the Union, as broad and pure as truth and justice themselves, it is hoped an occasion so noble, will not be suffered to pass unimproved.

It is obvious that the voluntary toleration of slavery in those additions of territory, which are made to us by the steady and gradual increase of population, would not only afford an argument that the people of the United States feel no repugnance to it in principle, and thereby would subject us to the charge of inconsistency in the eyes of mankind; but also yield an encouragement to the continuance of that odious traffic, now pursued only by the basest of men, to whom a new and extensive market will thus be opened, and it is much to be feared, that the utmost vigilance will render it impossible to prevent it. The

certain effect will be greatly to increase the number of slaves, beyond their gradual augmentation by birth. The love of ease is natural to mankind, and the owner of landed estate will take every opportunity of acquiring by purchase those whose forced labour, will diminish the necessity of his own. The price of these unhappy beings will be raised. The pecuniary attractions of this inhuman traffic will be increased, and the baseness of the motives which originally suggested it, will presume to shelter itself under the false pretence of a national sanction.

If the market will thus be enlarged, it will also be perpetuated, or at least continued for an almost indefinite duration. What is allowed to one new State, will be claimed by the next that is formed as a sort of right, and the hydra of slavery will in time extend its reprobated form from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

No power, however carefully conceived or faithfully executed, will be able to arrest the progress of this illegal increase. No compensation can ever be made for the additional multitudes who will thus be doomed to suffering and sorrow, and no political ablution can ever efface this voluntary stain from our national character.

Nor can any countervailing benefit be suggested to meet these evils.

If the population of our western wilds should proceed more slowly by the exclusion of slavery; is rapidity evidence of strength and firmness; and will not an industrious hardy yeomanry, accustomed to till their own fields, and perform their own labour, be more valuable additions to our strength than the enervated dependants on the labours of others? Your memorialists appeal with respect and confidence to the acknowledgments of distinguished men among the Southern planters, that slavery is in this respect, as in many others, a sensible and serious evil, which they lament the more, because they conceive that it cannot be remedied.

Why should it be introduced again without necessity, to effect an injury to ourselves, which in a short time, will become too deeply rooted to be removed.

Your memorialists forbear to trespass further on your time. The subject is of awful importance; it is closely connected with the future destinies of our country. The convenience and cupidity of the western settler are alone arrayed against the consistency of our public conduct, the happiness and the great-

ness of the nation. If their erroneous wishes be consulted in the arrangements that shall be made, the day may not be very distant, when the assent of our legislature will be deplored as the cause of incurable regret, by those who now so earnestly solicit it. But, between motives of mistaken local interest on one side, and the high consideration of national character, public stability, and acknowledged justice on the other, it is most respectfully hoped that Congress will not be at a loss to decide.

On behalf of the Committee,

WILLIAM RAWLE, Chairman.

On motion, ordered, That the report of the committee named in the sixth resolution of the Committee of Arrangement, be referred to the acting committee, to take such measures in relation to the recommendation therein contained as said committee think proper.

The following resolution was adopted.

Resolved, That the acting committee of the Convention be requested to have a collection made, forthwith, of all such facts and documents, as may tend to aid in the investigation of the question of restricting slavery in the new states, proposed to be enacted in the Congress of the United States; and that they have a statement of such facts and documents printed, and transmit the same to such members of the national Legislature, as they may consider willing to receive the same.

The committee appointed to draft a memorial to Congress on the subject of the illicit domestic trade in persons of colour, were, on motion, continued.

On motion, resolved, That the President of the Convention present the thanks of the Convention to Thomas Clarkson and William Dilwyn, of London, for the interesting communications received from them, and that he transmit to them, in the name of the Convention, copies of the Minutes of this and the preceding session.

The committee appointed to prepare an address to the different Abolition Societies in the United States, presented an address which was adopted as follows:

To the Abolition and Manumission Societies in the United States.

The American Convention, for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, previous to closing the business of their session, proceed to invite the attention of their constituent societies, to some of the important and interesting subjects, which have been under their consideration.

As they are satisfied that they have assembled by the permission of that Being, who regards with equal interest all rational creatures, so they are deeply sensible, that it is only by his blessing on their labours, that they and the advocates and friends of the oppressed race, whose benefit they would promote, can succeed in their labours. The Convention have viewed with an anxious solicitude, the numerous and momentous subjects presented to them; but as they have remembered that the cause of justice and humanity will ultimately prevail, they have felt a pleasure in being employed, though as feeble instruments, in the accomplishment of so good a work.

It is with peculiar satisfaction, that we have seen by the communications received from the different societies, that the friends of emancipation, although comparatively few, are still unwearied and persevering; and although some of us continue to be afflicted with the sighs of the captive, and to hear the clashing of his chains, yet, in the West, a voice has been raised in behalf of the slave, and his cause has been embraced by many good and enlightened men. We allude to the communications from the societies of Kentucky, and Tennessee, which, although yet in their infancy, and now feeble, although surrounded with difficulties and embarrassments, yet will they become as Nazarites in the cause of African emancipation.

The Convention are the more gratified with the appearance of these societies, as they not only afford an evidence that the fiat has gone forth to that part of the moral world, "to divide the light from the darkness;" but they will be as rallying points for many whose labours have been lost for want of a united effort. May none be willing to remain neuter. For let it be remembered, that at this momentous and deeply interesting crisis, when ignorance cannot be made a plea for inaction, we may with perfect justice, admit the presumption, that "he that is not for us, is against us."

In recalling the time that has elapsed since the rights of the unfortunate Africans were first asserted, how many of those

whose tongues were once eloquent in their cause, do we find laid in the silent grave! How many arms, vigorous in the defence of helpless humanity, have been paralyzed by death! Those who commenced the work of emancipation with their ears filled with the cry of the oppressed, were not blessed with the sight of its completion, they in a righteous confidence that the cause would be supported, have rested from their labours, and bequeathed to us the privilege of vindicating the rights of injured and oppressed man.

The Convention have thought proper to renew their applications for assistance and support, to some of the legislative and executive authorities of our country. Although our previous petitions seem to have been, in some instances, unavailing, yet we believe the ears of our rulers are not closed against us. When we find that there is no longer access to their feelings as men, or to their justice as legislators, we shall then, and not till then, cease to intreat them.

We have also been anxiously interested in the passage of the proposed law of Congress, prohibiting the further introduction of slavery into the territory of Missouri, when as a state, it shall be admitted into the Union. Believing that not only the cause of humanity, but the prosperity of that country, is involved in the decision, we assert, that it is the duty of legislators, to prevent by seasonable enactments, that coalition of crime, with sordid interest, which it has been found so difficult to dissolve.

The Convention, unwilling to despair of preventing the vile and nefarious practice of kidnapping, by which free persons of colour are fraudulently removed from one state to another, and wishing that nothing which it is in their power to do, may remain undone, have applied to the legislatures of some of the southern states, requesting them to provide, by adequate penalties, for the protection of their free citizens of colour. But, as it respects our applications to the individual legislatures, conscious as we are of the uncertainty of the enactment of any effectual provisions, we mainly look to you, the tried friends of the oppressed, to use your individual and united endeavours to check the progress of this heinous evil, by presenting to your respective legislatures, memorials adapted to the subject accompanied with such facts as may fully elucidate it; more may thus perhaps be effected, than by the applications of the Convention, which has not those facts and circumstances so much at its command.

Our sentiments on the subject of education have been so often reiterated, that we need only say that its increasing importance becomes daily more evident. We are persuaded that you feel it so, and we earnestly intreat you to carry into effect all proper measures for extending its advantages to those for whom we are especially interested; whenever the number of pupils will admit, let free-schools be established. And as reason and experience teach us that the instruction of females in all branches of domestic economy, is of primary importance, we recommend the annexation of schools for sewing, knitting, &c. to those established for literary improvement.

Finally, be vigilant—and may the vigour, and perseverance which peculiarly belong to a dignified and righteous cause, call down upon your labours the blessings of Heaven.

RICHARD PETERS, Jun. President.

The following Resolutions were adopted.

Resolved, That the President of this Convention be empowered to call a special meeting thereof, at any time he may think proper, and that the said meeting be convened at New York.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Convention be presented to the Select Council, for the use of their chamber.

Resolved, That the acting committee be directed to prepare the minutes of this Convention, and cause the same to be published.

The Convention then adjourned.

MINUTES
OF THE
SEVENTEENTH SESSION
OF THE
AMERICAN CONVENTION
FOR PROMOTING THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY,
AND IMPROVING
THE CONDITION OF THE AFRICAN RACE.

CONVENED AT PHILADELPHIA,

On the third day of October, 1821.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE CONVENTION.

Atkinson & Alexander, Printers.

1821.

MINUTES.

SELECT COUNCIL CHAMBER,

Philadelphia, October 2d. 1821.

THIS being the day appointed for the meeting of the Convention, the following Delegates attended, from the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.:—

William Rawle, Esq. Benjamin C. Parvin,
Thomas Shipley, Thomas Earle.

A quorum not being present, the attending Delegates adjourned until to-morrow, at 10 o'clock, A. M. at this place.

October 3d.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment—Evan Lewis, Vice President, in the Chair.

On motion, James W. Murray was appointed Secretary, pro tem.

The credentials of Delegates being produced, and read, it appeared that the following persons were appointed to represent the Societies respectively named in the Convention:

From the New-York Society for promoting the Manumission of Slaves, and protecting such of them as have been or may be liberated—

Joshua Underhill, Hugh McCormick,
Theodore Dwight, James Palmer,
John Stearns, Hiram Ketchum,
Goold Brown.

From the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, the relief of Free Negroes unlawfully held in bondage, and improving the condition of the African Race—

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| William Rawle, | Dr. Joseph Parrish, |
| David Paul Brown, | Abraham Lower, |
| James W. Murray, | Abraham L. Pennock, |
| Thomas Shipley, | Thomas Earle, |
| Dr. Edwin A. Atlee, | Benjamin C. Parvin. |

From the Delaware Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African Race—

| | |
|----------------|-------------|
| John Reynolds, | John Wales, |
| William Seal, | Evan Lewis, |
| Isaac Jackson. | |

Of these there were present:

From New-York—Goold Brown.

From Pennsylvania—Abraham Lower, James W. Murray, Thomas Shipley, Abraham L. Pennock, Benjamin C. Parvin.

From Delaware.—Evan Lewis, John Wales, John Reynolds.

The Convention, on motion, proceeded to elect a President, Vice-President, and Secretaries—when the following Officers were duly elected:

President, WILLIAM RAWLE, Esq.

Vice-President, EVAN LEWIS.

Secretaries, GOOLD BROWN, of New-York.

JAMES W. MURRAY, of Philadelphia.

On motion, *Resolved*, That the election of a Treasurer be postponed until to-morrow.

On motion, Resolved, That Abraham L. Pennock and John Wales be appointed a committee to settle the accounts of the Treasurer.

The following resolutions were moved, seconded, and ordered to lie on the table for consideration:

Resolved, That at each stated meeting of the Convention, a permanent committee be appointed, to consist of five members, whose duty it shall be to collect and digest the laws of the Union, and of the several States and Territories, relating to Negro Slavery; and report their proceedings from time to time, together with such other information relative to the past and present condition of the coloured population of the several states and territories as they may consider useful to the Convention.

Resolved, That the committee be authorised, for that purpose, to correspond in the name of this Convention, with the Societies represented therein, and such other associations and individuals as they may deem expedient.

Adjourned until three o'clock this afternoon.

October 3d.—3 o'clock, P. M.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment—William Rawle, Esq. President, in the chair.

Delegates present:

From New-York—Goold Brown.

From Pennsylvania—William Rawle, Esq. Abraham Lower, Dr. Edwin A. Atlee, Thomas Earle, James W. Murray, Thomas Shipley, Abraham L. Pennock, Benjamin C. Parvin.

From Delaware—John Reynolds, Evan Lewis, William Seal, John Wales.

The following communications to the Convention were presented, and read.

To the "American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the Condition of the African Race," to be held in Philadelphia, on the 2d. of October, 1821.

In reviewing the past transactions of this Society, in which we have witnessed many arduous and afflicting struggles in behalf of the descendants of Africa, with some of the worst passions of men, it is with considerable satisfaction that we no longer see the hardened kidnapper pursuing his nefarious traffic in the face of day. The number of cases of complaint, calling for the interposition of the Society, begins to diminish; and it is hoped, that the period is not far distant when, by the influence of our laws, kidnapping and negro-trading will be unknown among us.

Our schools, which now contain nearly 700 children of both sexes, continue to be taught on the Lancasterian system; and the improvement of the scholars is such as to be satisfactory to the trustees, and to afford a well-grounded hope that the effect of the benefits which they are now receiving, will be visible in the future history of our coloured population. Needle-work continues to be taught to the larger girls; and their improvement and interest in that branch have abundantly compensated for its introduction into our schools.

In looking to the future operations of this Society, there is but little of a local nature, on the subject of Slavery, that is likely to require its attention; perseverance in the course of philanthropy and justice has achieved, in this state, nearly all that laws can effect. We advert with peculiar pleasure to this fact, and mention it for the encouragement of other societies who may not yet have arrived at the same desirable point. But a little while

ago, we were surrounded with enemies on every side; and the number of advocates for Negro emancipation was, in comparison with the whole number of citizens, a mere handfull; our society, in its infancy, and for many years after its formation, consisted of not more than 100 active members; and, in its greatest prosperity, has never exceeded 400, in a population of 100,000 souls. The march towards emancipation has been slow, but regular; and it is believed, we may now with confidence assert, that a great majority of the citizens of New-York, and of the state, are averse to Slavery. We mention these interesting facts for the single object of showing how much the steady progress of philanthropy may accomplish, even though surrounded by an apparently overwhelming opposition; and to encourage our distant brethren to form themselves into associations for the accomplishment of the great object in view. In the capacity of a society each of its members obtains additional strength, and their united operations are more efficient. They are as a light set on a hill, which enlightens all around it. It is very desirable to us to see others, more particularly in the South and West, becoming zealous advocates in this interesting cause; and we are persuaded there are, in various parts of our Southern and Western states, many whose minds and hearts are in unison with our own. They will be able to enlighten and convince others; particularly, through the medium of extensive associations.

The late acquisition of the Floridas has introduced many slaves into the United States, and, at the same time, has increased the opportunities of kidnapping and inveigling coloured persons, to supply the yet unsatisfied demand in that "market." Its extensive maritime borders, where the prohibitory laws relating to the introduction of Slaves

are not so strictly regarded, give room to fear, that the direct trade to Africa may receive some encouragement from that quarter. These considerations, while they are sources of concern and regret, will not fail to induce continued and increasing vigilance.

This Society, in common with the friends of abolition, have to regret the failure, in Congress, of the attempt to fix limits to the further extension of Slavery in our Southern and Western borders. But it is a consolation to reflect, that the best arguments were not against us; and that beneficial results may be hoped from the discussion.

The constitutional question involved in the Missouri Bill appears to have been referred, by Congress, to the decision of the courts. A late law passed by the corporate authority of the District of Columbia, in which, it is believed, the natural and lawful rights of free persons of colour are invaded and violated, affords an opportunity of speedily placing this important question before the highest judicial tribunal in the United States. Various important considerations induce the desire that no time should be lost in bringing up this point for adjudication; an opportunity so convenient has not before offered; of the final judgment of the court but little doubt is entertained; and from a judicial decision on the subject, most substantial benefits are anticipated.

THE OFFICERS OF THIS SOCIETY ARE:

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cadwallader D. Colden, | President. |
| George Newbold, | 1st Vice President. |
| Peter A. Jay, | 2nd do. |
| Jeremiah Thompson, | Secretary. |
| Robert White, | Assistant Secretary. |
| Robert C. Cornell, | Treasurer. |
| Joseph Corlies, | Register. |

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| David S. Brown, | Chairman } of Standing |
| Goold Brown, | Secretary } Committee. |
| Hugh M'Cormick, | Chairman } of the Board of |
| Robert F. Mott, | Secretary } Trustees of Schools |
| Hiram Ketchum, | Chairman } of Committee of |
| Isaac M. Ely, | Secretary } Correspondence. |
| Nathan Comstock, | Chairman } of Committee of |
| Lindley M. Moore, | Secretary } Ways & Means. |
| Cadwallader D. Colden, | |
| Peter A. Jay, | |
| Thomas Addis Emmet, | |
| William Slossen, | |
| Isaac M. Ely, | |
| Benjamin Clark, | |
| Hiram Ketchum, | |
| William Sampson, | |

Counsellors.

We have appointed the following persons to represent us in the ensuing Convention, viz. Joshua Underhill, James Palmer, Hugh M'Cormick, John Stearns, Theodore Dwight, Hiram Ketchum, and Goold Brown.

CADWALLADER D. COLDEN, President.

JEREMIAH THOMPSON, Secretary.

New-York, 9th Month, (September) 25th. 1821.

*To the American Convention for the Abolition of Slavery,
&c.*

The Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, the relief of Free Negroes unlawfully held in bondage, and improving the condition of the African race, look forward with pleasing anticipations to the

period when they shall witness another assemblage of the friends of emancipation; the advocates of freedom and humanity. Since the last meeting of the Convention our country has passed through a period of great political excitement, the greatest and most general, perhaps, that has ever prevailed in the Union, on the subject of our common views and exertions. It is a matter of congratulation to the Society that, although the objects, proposed in the late public discussions by the friends of emancipation residing in states which are free from the curse of Slavery, have not been attained, yet much benefit has resulted from their exertions. Limits have been set to the extension of this evil in our Western territories; and if the same spirit which dictated the late resistance to Slavery shall continue to be exerted, the shores of the Pacific, and a large extent of territory on the Missouri and the Mississippi, will be saved from this scourge of humanity. The public feeling excited by late events is a pledge that energy and perseverance will not be wanting, when their exertion shall hereafter become necessary. It is, indeed, consolatory to remark, that the late discussions have given a beneficial direction to public sentiment. This result (the necessary consequence of an increased attention to the subject,) is apparent in every part of the Union where the voice of justice and the love of liberty are not opposed by the suggestions of interest or apprehension. The Society have felt its beneficial effects, in the increased number of their members and consequent extension of their utility. Thus encouraged, they have continued their attention to the objects of their institution; and have pleasure in reflecting that, although their success has not always equalled their wishes, their labours have not been unrewarded.

Little remains to be effected in the legislation of this

state for the final extirpation of Slavery within its boundaries. Pennsylvania entered early and zealously on the career of emancipation, and the philanthropy of her legislature has provided sufficiently for the complete liberation of the coloured inhabitants of the state from the degrading bondage to which they were formerly condemned. The judicial decisions of some inferior courts have lately threatened to defer the period at which these benevolent views shall be finally accomplished. The act for the gradual abolition of Slavery having provided that the children of registered slaves should be bound to their former masters until a certain age, and held by them in the same manner that servants bound by indenture for four years were, a claim has been advanced on the part of such masters to hold the children of their indented female servants in the same manner and to the same age that the parent was bound. This claim, we regret to say, has been recognised; but, as we are encouraged by the opinion of able counsel, to consider it repugnant to the spirit and inconsistent with a fair interpretation of the law on which it is founded, we doubt not that the decision will be reversed, whenever the question can be brought before the Supreme Court of the commonwealth. Should we be unable to bring the subject to this result, we feel confident that the legislature, acting in conformity with the feelings and opinions of the people, will, on application, provide a prompt and efficient remedy.

The protection of free persons against those who invade their liberty under colour of law, or without any pretence of right seek to effect their purposes by lawless violence, has been unremittingly attended to by the acting committee of this Society. It is with great satisfaction, we are enabled to state to the Convention that

our exertions in this respect, within our own state, have been efficiently supported by public authority. A law of the commonwealth has been enacted since the last meeting of the Convention, by which the inhuman crime of kidnapping is further restrained and punished. Justices of the Peace and Aldermen are, by the same law, prohibited from officiating under the act of Congress, in cases of persons held to labour in other states and claimed in this as fugitives. A more solemn hearing, and, in many instances, a more just and impartial decision, is thus secured to the unfortunate objects of such claims; who are further benefitted by the publicity given to their situation, and the consequent facility afforded them for procuring the aid of their friends.

The melioration of the condition of the African race, and, as a means of effecting this object, the education of their children, have ever been favorite objects of attention with this Society. The schools under their direction continue to be numerously attended; and from the report of the school committee the Society have learned with pleasure that the scholars are, in general, punctual in their attendance, orderly in their deportment, and attentive to their studies. The effects of this attention cannot fail to prove beneficial, and must be anticipated with pleasure, even by those who are most lukewarm in the cause of this injured race. Impressed with these views; deeming the education of coloured children as important to society as that of others, and believing that public aid was even more necessary to the former than to the latter, the Society has endeavored to procure the assistance of public funds for this purpose. The exertions of a special committee, to whom the subject was confided, have hitherto been ineffectual; but the justice and legality of our request are so apparent, that we still cherish a hope they

will eventually prove successful. This hope is strengthened when we advert to the considerations of enlightened policy by which our request is supported. But one sentiment prevails on the subject of education. It lessens the propensity to vice, promotes the comfort and dignity of the individual, and in the same degree adds to the resources and happiness, and advances the welfare and good order of the community.

The Society are gratified by the reflection that these effects of their exertions are visible in the actual condition of the coloured population of this district. Notwithstanding the depressed and, in many respects, degraded situation of that class of our fellow beings, just emerging from the most humiliating Slavery, excluded from most of the respectable and profitable employments of life, confined to the humblest and least gainful occupations, with strong prejudices to surmount, and labouring under every species of difficulty; there is, nevertheless, a smaller proportion of their colour than of the white population, chargeable as paupers to the community. This fact, under such circumstances, would prove, in the absence of all others, that the exertions of the friends of humanity have not been in vain.

The feelings of satisfaction excited by these views are checked, when the Society reflects on the difficulties it has encountered in reclaiming those unfortunate objects of its care who have been kidnapped, and taken into other states. Great numbers from Pennsylvania are in this unfortunate situation. Torn from their homes and relatives, deprived of the protection and advice of their friends, and forced to a great distance from the means of proving and defending their rights, these wretched victims of avarice and cruelty languish a long time in bondage before they can procure assistance. Many are never

heard of by those interested in their fate, and of such as are fortunate enough to make known their situation, numbers sue in vain for liberation, in consequence of the difficulty of transmitting evidence from a distance, and making other arrangements to procure their release. Their hapless condition is aggravated by the laws of several states; in which, the black or mulatto is always presumed to be a slave until he shews the contrary. To do this, is, in many instances, extremely difficult from the expense and trouble attending the transmission of testimony to distant places, especially where, as frequently is the case, the identity of the person is disputed. The Society have considered this subject of great importance, and, in May last, presented a memorial on the subject to the executive of this commonwealth. They respectfully recommend to the Convention, to consider what measures may be advantageously adopted in relation to the evil alluded to; one which, as it is connected with general rather than local laws, appears an appropriate object of attention to a body in which the views of several states are represented. This Society will not anticipate the judgment of the Convention on the subject, but they look upon the outrages upon personal freedom, in the free states, as resulting from the continuance of slavery in others; and, more immediately, from the traffic in slaves from one state to another; a traffic which aggravates the sufferings of the slave, endangers the liberty of the free, for which necessity affords no excuse; and which is as demoralizing in its effects as the slave trade on the ocean, and scarcely less disgraceful in its character. With what consistency then, we may respectfully enquire of the states who tolerate it, is one permitted with impunity while the other is punished as piracy.

The Society doubt not, that the Convention will continue to exert every endeavour to effect the abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia. The Congress of the United States having exclusive jurisdiction in that district, the continuance of Slavery in it is a reproach to the whole republic. The American people have the power, and surely they cannot want the will to wipe off the stain upon their reputation, of suffering Slavery to remain in the capital of a country justly boasting of its liberty. The time has, we think, arrived, or is rapidly approaching, when this desirable object can be effected. If deceived in this expectation, at least let us have the consolation to reflect that exertions on our part have not been withheld.

The late acquisition of territory on our southern frontier, opens an extensive and interesting field of exertion to the American people. We hope that it may prove one in which humanity may be usefully employed. To arrest the increase of negro slavery in that favoured region : and secure its final abolition there, are objects worthy of our prompt and vigorous efforts. They will doubtless engage the attention of the enlightened body we are addressing, and whatever measures it may recommend, or adopt in relation to these objects, shall be seconded by our zealous endeavours.

On looking back on what has already been effected, in favour of emancipation, every inducement is found for continued activity ; and these inducements become stronger when we direct our views to futurity. The cause in which we are enlisted is one of the most noble that man can engage in. It is recommended by justice, humanity and patriotism ; has the sanction of reason and religion ; will command the approbation of mankind, and receive the blessing of ALMIGHTY GOD. Under his divine provi-

dence it cannot fail to be successful. Much has been done by our predecessors. To complete the undertaking they have so worthily commenced, a steady, calm and inflexible perseverance should be exerted on our part; and should we not live to witness its completion, we will leave the unfinished task as a blessed and honourable legacy to posterity.

We have delegated William Rawle, Esq. Abraham Lower, Doctor Edwin A. Atlee, James W. Murray, Thomas Shipley, David Paul Brown, Abraham L. Pennock, Doctor J. Parrish, Benjamin C. Parvin, and Thomas Earle, to represent this Society in the Convention; and unite on our behalf in the measures which may be suggested from other quarters of the Union for the furtherance of the great objects of our institution.

J. PRESTON, Vice-President.

Attest,

BENJAMIN WILLIAMS, Secretary.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY ELECTED 28TH DEC. 1820.

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| <i>President,</i> | William Rawle, Esq. |
| <i>Vice-Presidents,</i> | Joseph M. Paul, Jonas Preston, M. D. |
| <i>Treasurer,</i> | Thomas Shipley. |
| <i>Secretaries,</i> | Benjamin Williams, Blakey Sharpless. |

Counsellors,

Philadelphia—Richard Peters, jun. John Sergeant, Richard C. Wood, John Keating, jun. William Rawle, jun. David Paul Brown. *Bucks County*—Matthias Morris. *Montgomery*—John Henderson. *Lancaster*—James Hopkins. *Delaware*—Samuel Edwards.

Board of Education.

Blakey Sharpless, Edward Needles, Philip Price, jun.
 Townsend Sharpless, Benjamin Albertson, Benjamin M.
 Hollinshead, John Field, jun. William P. Paxson, Solo-
 mon Temple, Thomas Ewen, jun. Joseph S. Kite, Caleb
 Carmalt, Joseph M. Truman.

Electing Committee.

Alexander Shaw, Jacob T. Bunting, Joseph M. Tru-
 man, Robert Murphy, James Cox, Daniel Smith, (G),
 Henry Troth, John H. Willits, Peter Wright, Isaac
 Barton, William Bryant, Benjamin C. Parvin.

*To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition
 of Slavery, &c.*

The Delaware Society, for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, are fully sensible of the importance of the present period, in relation to the cause in which they are engaged. The advocates for the Slavery of the African race have combined their influence, and united their endeavours to extend and perpetuate this scourge of our country, over the regions of the South and the West; whilst the friends of humanity and the defenders of the unalienable rights of men, have exhibited less unanimity and concord than their opponents; and thus the barriers, to the further extension of this evil, which justice and the sacred dictates of christianity required to be maintained, have been broken down; and the moral pestilence of Slavery has been spread over the virgin soil of the West, under the sanction of the representatives of a people, styling themselves, "the most free and enlightened nation on earth." In some of the free states, too, form-

ing this republican confederation, laws have been enacted, to prevent the ingress of free people of colour from other states; subjecting such of them, as shall presume to exercise one of the unalienable rights of a freeman, by pursuing the means of promoting his own happiness, to penalties, disabilities and vexations, equally repugnant to the feelings of humanity, the dictates of justice, the obligations of the christian religion, and the genius of our republican institutions: with these alarming facts before us, it is not a time for philanthropists to relax in their efforts for the purpose of enlightening the public mind on this important subject; and for promoting, by all wise and judicious means in their power, the melioration of the condition of the injured descendants of Africa in our land. Whilst we are boasting of the freedom and happiness we enjoy in this favoured country, shall we, silently and quietly, permit the poor African, who is legally free, to be hunted down, from place to place; from one state and district to another; for no other crime than the colour of his skin? Shall he find no resting-place for the sole of his foot, on this soil of civil and religious liberty?—forbid it justice—forbid it humanity.

The Delaware Society, since they last addressed the Convention, have been instrumental, through their acting committee, in releasing several people of colour, who were illegally detained in bondage.

The school for coloured children, in Wilmington, under the care of an association, composed principally of the members of this Society, has been kept up, and the progress of the pupils is encouraging and satisfactory to the managers. There is also a large school for coloured girls, gratuitously taught by a society of young women, in which the scholars are instructed in reading, writing,

and sewing; and which is well calculated to be of great advantage to those children, many of whom, through the instrumentality of that society, have been provided with suitable places.

**THE OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESENT YEAR
ARE:**

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|------------------------|----------------|
| <i>President,</i> | John Reynolds. |
| <i>Vice-President,</i> | Eli Hilles. |
| <i>Secretary,</i> | Samuel Hilles. |
| <i>Treasurer,</i> | William Seal. |

Acting Committee,
Joseph Bringhurst, Doctor Gideon Jacques, Henry L. Pepper, Michael Megear, and Isaac Jackson.

We have appointed John Reynolds, Evan Lewis, John Wales, William Seal, and Isaac Jackson, our Delegates to the Convention.

Approved at a meeting of the Delaware Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c. held at Wilmington, 10th Mo. 1, 1821.

JOHN REYNOLDS, President.

Attest,

SAMUEL HILLES, Secretary.

On motion, *Resolved*, That William Rawle, Esq. Evan Lewis, Goold Brown, John Wales, and Abraham L. Pennock, be appointed a committee of Arrangement, to consider the foregoing communications, and propose to the Convention such business as they may deem proper to engage its attention.

The committee appointed to examine the Treasurer's accounts, made the following REPORT, which was adopted:—

To the Convention.

The Committee appointed to examine the account of Jonas Preston, Treasurer, respectfully REPORT—

That they have performed that duty, and, on comparing his account with the vouchers, find there is a balance in his hands due the Convention, as per annexed statement, of forty-seven dollars, eighty-five cents; and there remains unpaid, two orders on the Treasurer of the Pennsylvania Society, for sixty dollars each, as reported at the last session of the Convention.

Respectfully submitted,

A. L. PENNOCK,
J. WALES.

Philadelphia, Oct. 3d. 1821.

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American Convention in account with J. Preston, Treasurer.

DR.

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|---------------------|-------|--|----------|
| 1820. | | To cash paid for Joseph Lea's balance, | \$9 43 |
| 7th. mo. 15th. | Ditto | B. & T. Kite, | 22 31 |
| — 20th. | Ditto | Hall & Atkinson, | 49 50 |
| — — | Ditto | John Carpenter, | 9 75 |
| 1821. 7th. mo. 9th. | Ditto | Thomas Shipley, | 7 6 |
| 9th. mo. 6th. | Ditto | Richard Peters, jun. | 8 90 |
| — — | Ditto | Ditto Ditto | 141 20 |
| | | Balance in Treasury, | 47 85 |
| | | | ===== |
| | | | \$296 00 |
| | | | ===== |

CR.

| | | |
|-------|--|----------|
| 1820. | 7th. mo. 17th. By Cash received from the New-York Manumission Society, | \$100 00 |
| | Two Dividends on eight Shares Phila- delphia Bank Stock, \$12 each, | 24 00 |
| 1821. | 2d. mo. 26th. Delaware Abolition Society's quota, | 25 00 |
| | 5th. mo. 8th. Columbia Abolition Society's quota, | 15 00 |
| | 7th. mo. 2d. Pennsylvania Abolition Society's quota, | 100 00 |
| | 10th. mo. 3d. Two dividends on eight Shares Phila- delphia Bank Stock, \$12 and \$20, | 32 00 |
| | | <hr/> |
| | | \$296 00 |

E. E. *Philadelphia, 10th. Mo. 3d. 1821.*

JONAS PRESTON, Treasurer.

Adjourned until to-morrow morning, at ten o'clock.

Philadelphia, October 4th. 1821.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment—the President in the chair.

Delegates present :

New-York—Goold Brown.

Pennsylvania—William Rawle, Esq. Doctor Edwin A. Atlee, Abraham Lower, Thomas Shipley, Thomas Earle, Benjamin C. Parvin, James W. Murray, David Paul Brown, Abraham L. Pennock.

Delaware—Evan Lewis, John Reynolds, William Seal, John Wales.

The committee of Arrangement made the following REPORT:

The committee of Arrangement, having considered the communications from the respective societies of New-

York, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, have selected those subjects on which it may be the duty of the Convention, at least, to deliberate, and, perhaps, eventually to act.

Among the first of these, is, the oppression exercised on the free blacks in those states that are deeply immersed in the turpitude of slave-holding, which has lately been copied by the municipal authority of the district of Columbia. It does not fall within the province of this committee to enter at large into this disgusting subject. It is sufficient to recommend, that it be referred to a committee of three members, to consider and report "on the means of securing to free persons of colour, throughout the union, the enjoyment of their natural and social rights, by procuring judicial decisions thereon, or endeavouring to obtain a repeal or a modification of the laws hostile thereto."

2d. The odious practice of kidnapping, although it appears, by the address of the New-York Society, to have considerably abated in that state, and although some good legislative provisions have been made in the state of Pennsylvania, is still too prevalent; and when the unhappy subject of this iniquitous depredation is once conveyed to a distant state, his recovery, by judicial means, is found to be almost impracticable. The following resolution on this subject is submitted:

Resolved, That a committee of three members be appointed to consider "the subject of kidnapping generally, and to devise and recommend such measures as may be most likely to diminish the evil, if it is impossible to destroy the existence of this national crime."

The acquisition of Florida threatens a continuance and increase of the illicit commerce in slaves; but there is also an internal commerce which ought to be checked. It is recommended that it be referred to a committee of

three members, "to consider and report on such further measures as may be necessary and practicable to prevent the continuance and probable increase of the Slave trade, as well with foreign countries as between the different states of the Union, the territories thereof, and the district of Columbia, or any of them."

The other subjects referred to in the several addresses are matters of information, on which it does not appear to be at present necessary to raise any special committees.

At the last session, a committee, which had been appointed to prepare a memorial to Congress on the continuance of a system of slavery within the district of Columbia, made a report, the consideration of which was postponed to the present session. The committee of Arrangement respectfully recommend, that this subject be taken into early consideration, as an article of unfinished and important business.

W. RAWLE, Chairman.

Oct. 4, 1821.

On motion, *Resolved*, That the report be adopted; and that the Convention proceed to appoint the committees mentioned therein.

The first subject, recommended to the attention of the Convention, by the committee of Arrangement, was, accordingly, referred to the following committee, viz. William Rawle, Thomas Shipley, and David P. Brown.

The second subject was referred to John Wales, John Reynolds, and Goold Brown.

The third subject was referred to Evan Lewis, Edwin A. Atlee, and James W. Murray.

James W. Murray, the secretary resident in Philadelphia, was instructed to receive from the former secretary the books and papers of the Convention.

The Acting Committee submitted to the Convention
the following REPORT:

*To the American Convention for the Abolition of Slavery,
&c.*

The Acting Committee, agreeably to the precedent established at the two last sessions, have prepared the following Report of their transactions during the recess of the Convention.

Being fully sensible that their exertions have not been commensurate with the important and trying scenes, in relation to the Abolition of Slavery, which have passed during their appointment, they rely with confidence on the candour and forbearance of the Convention, that their poor performance will not be too rigorously judged.

The crisis has been an awful one, and the minds of the citizens of these states have seldom been so much excited on any subject, as on that of the restriction of Slavery from new states. Although the committee were instructed to memorialize each of the states permitting Slavery, they believed it consistent with a sound discretion to delay it during the continuance of the discussion of the Missouri question.

Early in the 12th. Month last, the committee had prepared the speeches of Taylor and Talmadge, in the house of Representatives, that of Rufus King, in the Senate, and the report of the committee of the Delaware Society, respecting the constitutionality of Congress prohibiting Slavery in the new states, with a letter from the venerable John Jay, on the same subject; of which, they had one thousand copies printed in pamphlet form, and distributed. They had also 700 copies of the minutes of the last session printed, and distributed to the several

societies. Copies of those papers will be laid before the Convention. Feeling the importance of the session of Congress, in 1820, the committee prepared a memorial, setting forth the necessity of an alteration in the proposed constitution of Missouri, to prevent the introduction of Slaves, and to guard the rights of the free people of colour. The memorial was forwarded to John Sergeant, Esq. delegate in Congress from Pennsylvania, but our president having requested him to withhold it, if in his judgment it would be best, it was not presented. The Pennsylvania Legislature being in session, a committee was appointed to make an application to the members from Philadelphia, to use their influence to obtain instructions to the senators of that state to oppose the introduction of Missouri unless her constitution was amended.

The committee have received from Henry Darnall, president of the Kentucky Society, an interesting letter, which accompanies this report. They have received from that Society answers to the queries proposed by a former Convention which are recorded on the minutes.

Respectfully submitted in behalf of the committee.
EDWIN A. ATLEE, Chairman.

Attest,

T. SHIPLEY, Secretary.

The minutes of the acting committee were also read, and their proceedings being satisfactory to the Convention, were approved.

On motion, *Resolved*, that the several committees now appointed, upon the subjects proposed by the committee of arrangement, form a joint committee, to consider the propriety of publishing, and, if they deem the same proper, to prepare, an address to the citizens of the United

States on the several important subjects under consideration in the Convention.

The resolutions, offered yesterday, relative to the appointment of a committee to collect and digest the laws relating to negro slavery, were considered and adopted by the Convention: and the following members were appointed that committee—William Rawle, David Paul Brown, James W. Murray, John Wales and Thomas Shipley.

The following resolution, being moved and seconded, was ordered to lie on the table for consideration.

Resolved, That the Convention will consider in committee of the whole, the expediency and practicability of devising a plan for the general emancipation of negro slaves in the union and its territories.

The appointment of a treasurer was, on motion, deferred until to-morrow.

Adjourned to meet at half past three o'clock, this afternoon.

Half past three o'clock, P. M.

The Convention met, pursuant to adjournment—the Vice-President in the chair.

Delegates present:

New-York—Goold Brown.

Pennsylvania—Doctor Edwin A. Atlee, Thomas Shipley, Abraham Lower, James W. Murray, Thomas Earle, and Benjamin C. Parvin.

Delaware—John Reynolds, John Wales, Evan Lewis, and William Seal.

The following resolution was moved and seconded:

Resolved, That a committee of members be appointed, to correspond with intelligent individuals in Hay-

U, for the purpose of ascertaining the nature of the constitution and laws of that country, the probability of their permanence, and the prospect, with regard to advantageous situations, for coloured emigrants; and that the said committee be desired to report, to the next session of this Convention, their sentiments respecting the propriety of encouraging the voluntary emigration of people of colour, to that or any other place; and also to communicate any other information, that may be deemed useful, relative to the condition of the African race in other countries than the United States.

The Convention, on motion, resolved itself into committee of the whole, on the subject of the foregoing resolution.

After sitting some time, the committee rose, and recommended that the resolution should lie on the table for consideration, which was concurred in.

Adjourned, to meet at the *Clarkson Hall*, at half past seven o'clock this evening.

In the evening, the Convention met pursuant to adjournment—the Vice-President in the Chair.

Delegates present as in the afternoon.

On motion, the Convention resolved itself into committee of the whole, on the subject of the resolution offered in the afternoon; William Seal in the chair.

After considering the subject the committee rose, and reported that the resolution had been rejected: which report was agreed to.

The Convention went into committee of the whole, on the resolution relative to a general plan of emancipation.

After some time spent in discussion, the committee rose,

reported progress, and asked leave to sit again; which was granted.

An extract was read, from the minutes of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, stating the appropriation of forty dollars towards defraying the expenses of this Convention.

A certificate was also read of the appointment, by the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, of Doctor Jonas Preston, as a delegate to this Convention in the place of Doctor Joseph Parrish, resigned.

Adjourned to meet at the Select Council Chamber to-morrow, at 11 o'clock, A. M.

October 5th. 1821.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment—the president in the chair.

Delegates present:

New-York—Goold Brown.

Pennsylvania—William Rawle, Esq. Doctor Edwin A. Atlee, Abraham Lower, Thomas Shipley, Thomas Earle, James W. Murray, and Benjamin C. Parvin.

Delaware—Evan Lewis, John Reynolds, John Wales, and William Seal.

The committee, appointed to consider the first subject, recommended for consideration by the committee of arrangement, made the following REPORT—which was adopted.

The committee to whom it was referred to consider and report on the means of securing to free persons of colour, throughout the union, the enjoyment of their natural and social rights, by procuring judicial decisions thereon, or endeavouring to obtain a repeal or modification of the laws

hostile thereto, being of opinion, that, for the purpose of doing justice to the subject, as much information as possible should be collected in respect to the obnoxious laws and regulations now in force relative to free persons of colour, respectfully report and submit the following resolutions:

"Resolved, That the acting committee be, and they are hereby requested, to obtain, during the recess of the Convention, the fullest information possible in respect to the laws, ordinances and regulations affecting the natural and social rights of free persons of colour, in the several states and territories, and in the district of Columbia; together with such facts in relation to the execution of those laws, &c. as may tend to evince their impolicy and injustice.

"Resolved, That the first mentioned committee lend their assistance in such enquiries, and if by means thereof they shall become possessed of sufficient materials, that they do report to the next meeting of this Convention, if an adjournment shall take place: otherwise, through the acting committee to the next Convention."

W. RAWLE, Chairman.

The committee, appointed to consider the second subject reported by the committee of arrangement, made the following REPORT—which was adopted.

The committee to whom was referred the subject of kidnapping, respectfully report—

That in the opinion of your committee, there is no object of this association which demands more constant and vigilant attention, upon which their efforts can be exerted with more certainty of success, than the punishment and prevention of the atrocious crime of kidnapping. Such

are the facilities to the perpetration of this crime, afforded by the numerous shallops and craft of our rivers and bays, and the ease with which the unhappy victims are seduced from their homes, and the obstacles to the detection of offenders, that, these kidnappers are emboldened to keep up a regular chain of communication and barter from Philadelphia to the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake, where they are sold for the supply of the southern and western markets.

In any efficient measures to repress this evil, your committee has no doubt of the approbation and cordial support of every respectable class of society. Among the means to be adopted upon this subject, the committee would recommend an uniform system of laws in the different states with such provisions as would encourage prosecutions, and such penalties as will operate to prevent the commission of the crime. Heavy fines, solitary imprisonment and disfranchisement would, in the opinion of the committee, constitute the best modes of punishment.

Some measures might be adopted to caution persons of colour against the various modes that are practised to seduce them from their homes for the purpose of selling them into perpetual bondage. This subject would also be a proper topic in an address to the citizens of the United States, should any be adopted by this Convention.

All which is respectfully submitted in behalf of the committee.

J. WALES, Chairman.

The committee, appointed to consider the third subject proposed for consideration by the committee of arrangement, made the following REPORT—which was adopted.

The committee on the third subject reported by the committee of arrangement report—

That, in their opinion, there will not be sufficient time, during the sitting of this Convention, to enter fully into a consideration of the course necessary and proper to pursue in relation to the important subject submitted to them; they therefore propose that it be referred to the acting committee, to take such measures therein as to them may appear proper.

EVAN LEWIS, Chairman.

The joint committee, to whom was referred the subject of an address to the citizens of the United States, made the following REPORT—which was adopted.

The committee of nine members, who were directed to consider the propriety of an address from this Convention to the public, and to report a form thereof, if they deemed such address expedient, submit the following resolutions:

Resolved, That an address to the people of the United States would be expedient and proper.

Resolved, That the acting committee be instructed to prepare a suitable address to the public, embracing such interesting and important topics as have engaged the attention of this Convention, and to publish the same in behalf of the Convention, after submitting the same to the president, and obtaining his approbation and signature.

W. RAWLE, Chairman of the committee of nine.

October 5th. 1821.

The Convention, on motion, proceeded to elect a Treasurer; when Doctor Jonas Preston was duly elected.

The following delegates were appointed an acting committee, to transact any business that may occur during the recess of the Convention.

New-York—Theodore Dwight, Goold Brown.

Pennsylvania—Doctor Jonas Preston, Thomas Shipley, Doctor Edwin A. Atlee, Thomas Earle, Abraham Lower, Benjamin C. Parvin, James W. Murray.

Delaware—John Wales, Evan Lewis.

On motion, *Resolved*, That a committee of three members be appointed, to prepare an address to the several Societies friendly to the abolition of slavery and the relief and protection of persons of colour—Evan Lewis, Abraham L. Pennock, and James W. Murray were appointed that committee.

Resolved, That the acting committee be instructed to open a correspondence with humane and intelligent individuals in states where slavery is permitted, on the subject of its final abolition in such states, and also to suggest to such as reside in states where no abolition society exists, the propriety of forming associations for that object.

Adjourned to half past three o'clock, P. M.

In the afternoon the Convention met, pursuant to adjournment—the Vice-President in the chair.

Delegates present as in the forenoon.

The following preamble and resolution, being offered and seconded, was on consideration, adopted.

WHEREAS, this Convention is but imperfectly informed of the situation of coloured people in other countries; and as information of their condition may tend to advance the objects for which it was instituted—therefore, *Resolved*, That a committee of three members be appointed, to obtain information relative to the moral and political condition of the coloured inhabitants of Hayti and other fo-

reign countries, to carry on such correspondence, with individuals abroad, as shall appear expedient for that purpose.

Evan Lewis, Thomas Earle, and Thomas Shipley were, accordingly, appointed that committee.

The Convention resolved itself into committee of the whole, on the subject of a general plan of emancipation. After considerable discussion, the committee rose, and reported to the Convention the following resolution:

Resolved, That a committee of five members be appointed to devise a plan for the general emancipation of slaves; which shall be submitted to the consideration of this Convention at its next session.

The Convention adopted the resolution as reported; and Evan Lewis, James W. Murray, Thomas Earle, Doctor Edwin A. Atlee, and Doctor Jonas Preston were appointed a committee accordingly.

Resolved, That an adjourned session of this Convention be held on the 26th of November next, at the City of New-York; and, that the acting committee be directed to give notice of such adjournment to the Societies with which they usually correspond, and others instituted for similar objects.

Adjourned, to meet at New-York on the 26th of November next.

ADJOURNED SESSION.

COMMON COUNCIL CHAMBER,
New-York, November 26th, 1821.

At a meeting of the American Convention, held by adjournment, pursuant to a resolution passed October 5th, 1821—Evan Lewis, Vice-President, in the Chair.

By an extract from the minutes of the New-York Society, it appears, that George Newbold, Peter A. Jay, Isaac M. Ely, and Robert C. Cornell, have been added to the number of delegates previously appointed to represent that Society; and that Hugh McCormick has been, at his own request, released from the appointment.

Credentials were also produced, by which it appears that Lea Pusey and William Jackson, have been appointed to represent, in the Convention, the Chester County Society for preventing Kidnapping, and for improving the condition of the African race; and that Thomas Hazard, John Ward, and Rowland Hazard, have been appointed to represent the Abolition Society of Providence, Rhode Island.

The following Delegates were present,

From Pennsylvania—Thomas Shipley, Benjamin C. Parvin, and Abraham L. Pennock.

From Delaware—John Reynolds, and Evan Lewis.

From Chester County, Pennsylvania—Lea Pusey and William Jackson.

From Providence—Thomas Hazard.

From New-York—Joshua Underhill, Dr. John Stearns, Theodore Dwight, Peter A. Jay, Robert C. Cornell, Hiram Ketchum, and Goold Brown.

The following communications from the Societies of Chester County, Pennsylvania, and Providence, R. I. were presented and read.

To the "American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the Condition of the African race," to be held at the City of New-York on the 26th of November, 1821.

As Delegates from the "Chester County Society for preventing Kidnapping, and for improving the condition of the African race," are now to appear, for the first time, in the general Convention, we shall briefly inform that body, that our Society is of recent formation. It originated in an apprehension, that some of the descendants of the African race, legally entitled to the enjoyment of freedom, had been, at times, seized, and carried into Slavery: together with a conviction that many or most of those residing among us, who are permitted to enjoy unmolested this inestimable blessing, are yet far below the station in civil society, to which, as rational and accountable beings, they ought to aspire.

To combine our exertions, and thereby increase their effect, to prevent, as occasions may present, the first of these evils, and to contribute our part towards the improvement of the condition of this degraded race, are the objects contemplated by this establishment.

Our articles of Association will accompany this communication, and supersede the necessity of further explanation relative to the nature of our Society.

It must be obvious, that little could be reasonably expected, towards meliorating the condition of our coloured population, from the labours of a feeble band, during the period of a single year which has elapsed since the formation of this Society. Our plans for this purpose, are not so far matured as to deserve the notice of the Convention.

Only one case has occurred, in which our interference

was required, to rescue an individual from the yoke of illegal servitude. This case, though possibly little remarkable to those who are largely engaged in this species of labour, we shall particularly detail.

In First month last, a letter was received from the Sheriff of Hartsford County, Maryland, stating, that there was then confined in Belle Air jail, on suspicion of his being a fugitive slave, a black man, who asserted that he was free, and that he had been brought up in our neighbourhood. On the receipt of this letter, one of our acting committee furnished with the requisite evidences, repaired to Belle Air, and succeeded in convincing the authorities there, that the man was legally entitled to freedom. This might have been expected to procure his immediate release. A difficulty, however, was raised, respecting the expenses of his confinement, which our member was informed must be paid, or the man sold to service.

To prove the illegality of this procedure, an appeal was made to the law of that state, passed in 1817, which provides, that such expenses shall be paid out of the funds of the county, in cases where no evidence appears to establish the slavery of the prisoner. Of this law the officers professed themselves totally ignorant; and it was not without considerable difficulty they could be prevailed upon to liberate the man, whom they had confined on groundless suspicion, without the payment of fees.

This occurrence evinces the possibility of laws, enacted for the protection of these people, being permitted to lie, even in our land of boasted liberty, like the *code noir* of St. Domingo, a dead letter; unless the friends of emancipation be particularly careful to enforce their observance. Hence the propriety of diffusing, as extensively as practicable, among the friends of African liberty, a knowledge of the laws which relate to these people.

We have appointed Lea Pusey and William Jackson,

Jun. to represent this Society in the ensuing session of the Convention.

The officers of the Society, for the current year, are—

President, Lea Pusey.

Vice President, William Jackson, Jun.

Secretary, Abram Marshall, Jun.

Treasurer, William Swayne.

Acting Committee, Benjamin Price,

Abram Marshall, Jun.

James Smith,

Francis Wilkinson,

John Chandler, Jun. and

Israel Jackson.

Signed by direction of the Society, convened at London-grove, Tenth Month 27th, 1821.

(Signed) LEA PUSEY, President.

EZRA MICHENER, Secretary.

To the Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c. to be convened in New-York, by adjournment, on the last Monday in November, 1821.

PROVIDENCE, State of Rhode Island, }
21st of November, 1821. }

In compliance with an invitation from the acting committee of the Convention, communicated by their chairman, Edwin A. Atlee, the Providence Society for the abolition of the Slave trade, &c. at a special meeting on the 19th instant, appointed and authorized Messrs. Thomas Hazard and John Ward, of the city of New-York, and Rowland Hazard, Esq. of South Kingston in this state, all, or either of them, to represent this society in the Convention to be assembled in New-York, on the 26th instant. The gentlemen selected for this purpose were early and useful members of our association.

I am also directed by our Society to express their cor-

dial and zealous co-operation in the laudable objects of the Convention.

Signed by order, and in behalf of the Providence Abolition society.

Signed, GEO. BENSON, Secretary pro tem.

On motion, the Report of a Committee, appointed by the Sixteenth Convention, on the subject "of establishing settlements of free persons of colour within lands belonging to the United States" was read.

The Convention then resolved itself into a committee of the whole, on the subject of the above Report. Lea Pusey in the chair.

After some discussion, the Committee rose, reported progress, and asked leave to sit again. That leave was granted by the Convention.

On motion, resolved, that when this Convention shall adjourn, it adjourn till to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

Adjourned.

November 27th.

The Convention met, pursuant to adjournment.

Delegates present :

From Pennsylvania—Thomas Shipley, Benjamin C. Parvin, Abraham L. Pennock and Thomas Earle.

From Delaware—John Reynolds, and Evan Lewis.

From Chester County—Lea Pusey and William Jackson, Jun.

From Providence—Thomas Hazard.

From New-York—Joshua Underhill, Dr. John Stearns, Peter A. Jay, Robert C. Cornell, Hiram Ketchum, James Palmer and Goold Brown.

The subject of addressing a Memorial to Congress on the continuance of slavery in the District of Columbia, recommended to the notice of the Convention by their

committee of arrangement, was called up. After some consideration, the subject was referred to the attention of a committee, to report, by memorial, or otherwise. Hiram Ketchum, Abraham L. Pennock, and William Jackson, Jun. were named as that committee.

Theodore Dwight was added to the committee of three, appointed at the previous session of the Convention, to prepare an Address to the several Societies friendly to the abolition of Slavery, and the relief and protection of persons of colour.

The committee appointed to devise a plan for the general emancipation of slaves, produced a Report, which was ordered to be printed for the use of the members of the Convention.

On motion, the Convention again resolved itself into a committee of the whole, on the subject of the colonization of free persons of colour.

After a free expression of sentiment, the committee rose, and reported the following resolution:

Resolved, That the subject of the colonization of the free people of colour, be referred to a committee of five persons, to make a report thereon to this Convention.

The resolution was adopted, and the following members appointed accordingly: Evan Lewis, Peter A. Jay, Hiram Ketchum, John Reynolds, and William Jackson, Jun.

On motion, *Resolved*, That when this Convention shall adjourn, it adjourn to meet at six o'clock this evening.

Adjourned.

In the evening the Convention met pursuant to adjournment.

Delegates present:

From Pennsylvania—Thomas Shipley, Abraham L. Pennock, Benjamin C. Parvin, and Thomas Earle.

From Delaware—John Reynolds and Evan Lewis.

From Chester County—Lea Pusey and William Jackson, Jun.

From Providence—Thomas Hazard.

From New-York—Joshua Underhill, Dr. John Stearns, Theodore Dwight, James Palmer, Hiram Ketchum, and Goold Brown.

The committee to whom was referred the subject of addressing a Memorial to Congress, on the continuance of Slavery in the District of Columbia, made the following REPORT :

“ The committee to whom was referred the subject of drafting a Memorial to Congress, relative to Slavery in the District of Columbia, beg leave to report—that they have ascertained that a draft of a Memorial, on the same subject, adopted by a former Convention, was never presented to Congress; the committee therefore respectfully submit to the Convention the draft of a Memorial, which has been thus approved.

MEMORIAL.

To the honourable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled,

The Memorial of the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African Race,

Respectfully sheweth,

That, in the pursuit of the object of their association, your memorialists feel it their duty, to call your attention to the territory over which Congress holds exclusive legislation. The patriot, the philosopher, and the statesman, look to this spot, where the legislative authority of the Republic has an uncontrolled operation, for that perfect system of laws, which shall at once develope the wisdom of the government, and display the justice and benevolence of its policy.

Is it not an incongruous exhibition to ourselves, as well as to foreigners who may visit the seat of the government of the nation, whose distinguishing characteristic is its devotion to freedom, whose constitution proclaims that all men are born equally free, to behold, on the one hand, the representatives of the people, asserting, with impassioned eloquence, the unalienable rights of man; and, on the other, to see our fellow men, children of the same All-mighty Father, heirs like ourselves of immortality, doomed, for a difference of complexion, themselves and their posterity, to hopeless bondage?

Deeply impressed with this sentiment, your memorialists do earnestly, but respectfully, request your honourable body, to take into your serious consideration, the situation of Slavery in the District of Columbia; to devise a plan for its gradual, but certain abolition, within the limits of your exclusive legislation; and to provide that all children born of slaves, after a determinate period, shall be free.

Signed on behalf, and by order of the American Convention, assembled at New-York, November 28th, 1821."

The report of the committee was accepted: and the Memorial proposed, was adopted, and ordered to be signed by the President, and referred to the Acting Committee, to be disposed of, in the usual way.

The Acting Committee made a partial Report, and offered a draft of the Memorial to Congress, on the subject of preventing the extension of Slavery in the newly organized Territory of the Floridas. The proposed Memorial was read, and particularly considered by the Convention, and, after considerable discussion thereon, the question relative to its adoption was deferred till to-morrow evening.

On motion, *Resolved*, That, when this Convention shall

adjourn, it adjourn to meet at eleven o'clock to-morrow morning.

Adjourned.

November 28th.

At eleven o'clock A. M. the Convention met.

Delegates present:

From Pennsylvania—Thomas Shipley, Abraham L. Pennock, Benjamin C. Parvin, and Thomas Earle.

From Delaware—John Reynolds and Evan Lewis.

From Chester County—Lea Pusey and William Jackson, Jun.

From Providence—Thomas Hazard.

From New-York—Joshua Underhill, Dr. John Stearns, Peter A. Jay, Hiram Ketchum, Israel M. Ely, and Goold Brown.

Dr. John Stearns was added to the committee appointed to draft an address to the several Societies favourable to the abolition of slavery.

The following REPORT from the committee to whom was referred the subject of colonization was read and adopted.

REPORT.

'The committee to whom was referred the subject of colonization, report:

That, on taking a view of the subject generally, and considering the result thus far of the plan of colonization in Africa, as presented to us by the "American Colonization Society," they find additional evidence, to confirm the opinion expressed by this Convention, in their session of 1817. It is therefore thought unnecessary to enter anew into the discussion of this question.

The suggestion of a plan for setting apart a portion of

the western lands of the United States, for the purpose of establishing a Colony of free blacks, seems, at first view, to be liable to fewer objections, and to be surrounded with fewer difficulties, than the African plan. But when we enter into the details of this scheme, when we view it in relation to its probable effects, in a moral and political point of light, both on the colonists and on the white population of the United States, difficulties, deemed insurmountable, present themselves.

First, in relation to the emigrants.—To place the free blacks of our country, unacquainted as they generally are with the art of self-government, and destitute of the advantages of an education even the most limited, in a remote situation on our western borders, surrounded as they must be by Indian nations, and unprovided with the comforts of civilization, would not be, to improve their condition. By what laws would they be governed? by the laws of the Union, or by regulations of their own? If, by the former, would they be admitted into the Union, on an equal footing with the original States? The constitution of the United States does not clothe Congress with the power of governing them as a separate colony, forming no part of the American confederation. If a cession of territory should be made to the colonists, and they acknowledged as an independent nation, it is feared that they are not in a situation fitted for self-government, or for preserving amongst them the arts and comforts of civilized life.

But, in relation to the whites on their borders; would not a constant jealousy between them, producing acts of aggression and injustice, be productive of hostility, and even war and bloodshed. Again: If slavery in the United States is permitted still to exist, would not the proposed colony become an asylum for runaway slaves; and thus, as well as from other causes of hostility and irritation, become the means of promoting a servile war?

These are some of the objections that present themselves, to any plan of colonization on our western frontiers. It is therefore deemed most adviseable, to direct our attention to such means of mitigating the rigours of slavery, and of promoting, as much as possible, its final extinction in our land, as are feasible, and in accordance with the principles of justice, humanity, religion, and sound policy.

With respect to voluntary emigration to the Island of Hayti, the committee are of opinion, that further information would be necessary in forming a decided opinion, on the policy or expediency of encouraging such of the free coloured people as may be so disposed, to emigrate to that Island.

(Signed)

EVAN LEWIS, Chairman of the Committee,

The printed Report of a plan for the general emancipation of slaves, was now laid before the Convention.

On motion, the Convention resolved itself into a committee of the whole on the said report. After some time spent in the consideration of the subject, the committee rose and returned the Report, with amendments.

The Report, with the amendments, was ordered to lie on the table.

On motion, *Resolved*, That when the Convention shall adjourn, it adjourn to meet at six o'clock this evening.

Adjourned.

In the evening the Convention again met.

Delegates present:

From Pennsylvania—Thomas Shipley, Abraham L. Pennock, Thomas Earle, and Benjamin C. Parvin.

From Delaware—John Reynolds and Evan Lewis.

From Chester County—Lea Pusey and William Jackson, Jun.

From Providence—Thomas Hazard.

From New-York—Joshua Underhill, Theodore Dwight, Peter A. Jay, George Newbold, Robert C. Cornell, Dr. John Stearns, Isaac M. Ely, Hiram Ketchum, and Goold Brown.

The consideration of the adoption of the Memorial to Congress, on the subject of preventing the further extension of slavery in the territory of the Floridas, which was yesterday made the order of the present sitting, was resumed; and the Memorial adopted in the following form:

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled,

The American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African race, being deeply impressed with the magnitude of the evil of involuntary servitude, beg leave to call the attention of Congress, to the devising of such means as may be practicable for preventing its extension.

When we reflect on the praiseworthy regard shown to the rights of man, by the Republics of South America, in their public acts respecting Slavery, we cherish a hope that the United States will emulate their example, so far as the constitution will allow; and thus assist in hastening the period, when our country will no longer afford the advocates of despotism arguments in its defence, drawn from the inconsistency of Republicans;—when it will no longer furnish an exemplification of the truth, that those who are most zealous in asserting political and religious liberty for themselves, are too prone to trample on the claims of others to those blessings.

The evils of slavery, and its injustice, abstractedly considered, are so generally admitted by the citizens of all the states, that we deem it unnecessary to adduce arguments for their proof. A favourable occasion for circumscribing these evils, and discountenancing this injustice, is, we conceive, now offered to Congress, in the power and opportunity of legislating for the newly acquired territory of the Floridas.

The first Congress after the adoption of the American Constitution, composed partly of the framers of that instrument, having, with great unanimity, forbidden the introduction of slaves into the territory north-west of the Ohio; and more than three-fourths of the last Congress, having, after a full discussion of the constitutionality of the act, voted in favour of restricting the migration of slaves to another territory of the United States: the right of imposing such a restriction with regard to the Floridas, appears sufficiently established. Such being the case, we beseech you, by your duty to your fellow-creatures and to posterity, and by your duty to that Almighty Being who controls the destinies of nations, to strive to mitigate and limit an evil, so universally acknowledged and deplored. And may you, from so doing, reap a satisfaction, beyond any to be derived from possessing the fruits of the industry of thousands—the satisfaction of having been governed, in your conduct, by the principles of reason, humanity, and religion!

Though the motives already urged, appear sufficient to induce a prohibition of the further introduction of slaves into the Floridas, yet we will briefly mention some additional ones, supposed to possess considerable force.

The vacant lands within the new states and territories, have been looked upon as a field of promise,—a common patrimony for all the sons of the Republic who may choose to partake of it. The introduction of many slaves into a

territory, will totally prevent the settlement of free labourers within it. All the states, adapted to the cultivation of the valuable staples, cotton, sugar, and tobacco, having been hitherto open to the migration of slaves, it appears but equitable, now to reserve a district, for the free labourer to occupy in the culture of these articles. It is but just, that the citizens of those states where slavery is interdicted, should be enabled, without a sacrifice of their principles, to obtain a portion of the profits arising from the settlement of those new lands, which are suitable for rearing such products as are most in demand, and are, consequently, the most lucrative.

Signed on behalf, and by order of the American Convention, held at New-York, the 28th of November, 1821.

Resolved, That the foregoing Memorial be referred to the President of the Convention, and the acting committee, with instructions to present the same, whenever, in their judgment, it shall be expedient to do so.

The acting committee presented the following REPORT, which was accepted.

REPORT.

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

The acting committee report, that they have taken under their care the several subjects referred to them by the last session of the Convention.

A memorial to Congress on the subject of restricting the further extension of Slavery in the territory of the Floridas, has been prepared, and already presented to the Convention.

Agreeably to the direction of the Convention, the societies at Providence, (Rhode-Island,) New-York, Philadelphia, Wilmington, (Delaware,) Easton, (Maryland,) and

Baltimore, Guilford County, (North-Carolina,) Chester County, (Pennsylvania,) Columbia, (Pennsylvania,) Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee, were respectfully notified of the adjournment of the Convention, and requested to appoint representatives.

A correspondence has been commenced, with proper individuals in the Southern states, on the subject of the final abolition of Slavery, and suggesting the expediency of establishing Societies for that purpose. But the committee are unable, at the present time, to furnish the Convention with any documents in reply.

During the recess, the committee have had a small edition of the minutes of the last session of the Convention, printed, for the use of the Delegates, at the adjournment; which have been duly forwarded to them.

The other subjects, which claim the attention of this committee, have been referred to sub-committees, who have not yet reported.

Respectfully submitted to the Convention, by order, and on behalf of the acting committee.

(Signed)

EVAN LEWIS, Chairman.

Attest, BENJAMIN C. PARVIN, Secretary.

New-York, Eleventh month, 28th. 1821.

The consideration of the general plan of emancipation, ordered in the morning to lie on the table, was resumed, and the Convention, for the more free discussion of the subject, resolved itself into a committee of the whole.

After a full examination of the subject, the committee rose, and returned the document without further amendment.

The question upon adopting it being then taken, it was approved by the Convention, and is as follows:

A PLAN

FOR THE GENERAL EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments were instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

[Declaration of Independence.]

These self-evident truths, thus solemnly promulgated, and always admitted in theory; at least in relation to ourselves; are well-known to be partially denied or disregarded, in most sections of the union, in relation to the descendants of the African race. That a nation professing the principles of equal rights, and loudly proclaiming the justice of its laws, should contain a population, amounting to nearly one-seventh of the whole, who know little of the operation of those laws, except as instruments of oppression, is one of those political phenomena, which prove how little the patriot's boast, or the orator's declamation is guided by the light of truth.

It must be admitted that it would neither be politic nor safe, for the present system of slavery in the United States to be long continued, without providing some wise and certain means of eventual emancipation.

Slavery with its present degrading characteristics, is a state of actual hostility between master and slave, in which "a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation, is among possible events; and this may become probable by supernatural interference! The Almighty has no attribute which can take part with us in such a contest."—Jefferson.

It is a truth generally acknowledged, that Slavery is

an evil, not only by those whom principle, or education have taught to proscribe the practice, but by men of reflection, even in the very vortex of slavery. To condemn then, what few, if any, will presume to defend, is rendered unnecessary; and the ingenuity of the philanthropist would be more judiciously exercised in devising a practicable remedy for this deep-rooted disease, than in heaping reproaches upon those, who, by the conduct of their ancestors, are placed in the condition of masters of slaves. Few of those who from their childhood, have been placed in situations far removed from the scenes which slavery exhibits, can fully appreciate the difficulties, the vexations, and the anxieties, incident to the life of a slave-holder. To devise a plan, then, by which the condition, both of the master and slave may be meliorated, is a desideratum in the policy of this country:—A plan which will promote the immediate interest of the master, in the same ratio, that the slave is made to rise in the scale of moral and intellectual improvement; and which will eventuate in the ultimate enfranchisement of the long injured and degraded descendants of Africa. The evils of slavery being generally acknowledged, and its impolicy fully evinced, the important question which remains to be solved, will naturally present itself: What are the means by which this evil is to be removed, consistently with the safety of the master, and the happiness of the slave? Perhaps to some, this question, considered on the ground of absolute justice, may appear of easy solution: *Immediate, universal emancipation.*

But however pleasing the prospect may be to the philanthropist, of getting clear of one of the evils of slavery, yet a full examination of local circumstances, must convince us that this would be, to cut, rather than untie the Gordian knot.

Reformation on a large scale, is commonly slow. Habits long established, are not easily and suddenly changed. But were it possible to induce the inhabitants of the slaveholding states, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to let loose at once the whole tide of black population, it may reasonably be questioned whether such a measure would not produce as much evil as it would cure. Besides, such a measure, if it were practicable, would fall short of simple justice. We owe to that injured race, an immense debt, which the liberation of their bodies alone would not liquidate. It has been the policy of the slaveholder to keep the man whom he has doomed to interminable servitude, in the lowest state of mental degradation: to withhold from him as much as possible the means of improving the talents which nature has given him. In short, to reduce him as near to the condition of a machine as a rational being could be. Every inducement—every excitement, to the exertion and development of native talent and genius, is wanting in the slave.—Hence, to throw such a being, thus degraded, thus brutalized, upon society, and then expect him to exercise those rights, which are the birthright of every son and daughter of Adam, with advantage to himself, or to the community upon which he is thrown, is to suppose that the laws established for the government of universal nature, should in this case be changed. As well might we expect a man to be born in the full maturity of his mental faculties, or an infant to run before it had learned the use of its limbs.

A plan, then, for universal emancipation, to be practicable, must be gradual. The slave must be made to pass through a state of pupilage and minority, to fit him for the enjoyment and exercise of rational liberty.

"If then the extremes of emancipation, and perpetual, unlimited slavery be dangerous," and impolitic, "the safe and advisable measure must be between them."

And this brings us again the question, How can we get clear of the evils of slavery, with safety to the master, and advantage to the slave? For the solution of this difficult problem, the following outlines of a plan for a gradual, but general and universal emancipation is proposed. Let the slaves be attached to the soil,—give them an interest in the land they cultivate. Place them in the same situation in relation to their masters, as the peasantry of Russia, in relation to their landlords. Let wise and salutary laws be enacted, in the several slave holding states, for their general government. These laws should provide for the means of extending to the children of every slave, the benefits of school learning. The practice of arbitrary punishment for the most trivial offences, should be abolished.

An important step towards the accomplishment of this plan, would be, to prohibit by law the migration, or transportation of slaves from one state to another:—and also to provide, that no slave should be sold, out of the county, or town in which his master resides, without his own consent. Provision should then be made for the introduction of a system of general instruction on each farm or plantation; each slave who has a family should be furnished with a hut, and a portion of land to cultivate for his own use; for which he should pay to the landlord an annual rent. For each day he was employed by the master or landlord, he should be allowed a stipulated price: out of the proceeds of his stipulated wages, those things necessary for his comfortable maintenance, should be deducted; if furnished by the master.

The time given him to cultivate his allotment of ground, should be deducted from his annual hire. A wise and equitable system of laws, adapted to the condition of blacks, should be established for their government. Then a character would be formed among them; acts of dili-

gence and fidelity would meet their appropriate reward, and negligence and crime would be followed by their merited chastisement. The execution of this plan, in its fullest extent, would be followed by increased profits to the landholder.

It would be productive of incalculable advantage to the slave, both in his civil, and moral condition:—And thus the interest of the master, and the melioration of the condition of the slave, would be gradually and reciprocally advanced in the progress of this experiment. Although legislative provisions would greatly facilitate the adoption of this plan, it is not necessary for individuals to wait the movement of government. Any one may introduce it on his own plantation, and reap many of its most important advantages.

The plan now proposed is not new. It is not a Utopian and visionary theory, unsupported by experience. It has been successfully tried in the Island of Barbadoes, by the late Joshua Steele; and the result exceeded his most sanguine expectations. “The first principles of his plan,” says Dr. Dickson, “are the plain ones, of treating the slaves as human creatures: moving them to action by the hope of reward, as well as the fear of punishment: giving them out of their own labours, wages and land, sufficient to afford them the plainest necessaries:—And protecting them against the capricious violence, too often of ignorant, unthinking, or unprincipled, and perhaps drunken men and boys, invested with arbitrary powers, as their managers, and “drivers.” His plan is founded in nature, and has nothing in it of rash innovation. It does not hurry forward a new order of things;—it recommends no fine projects, or ticklish experiments; but, by a few safe and easy steps, and a few simple applications of English law, opens the way for the gradual introduction of a better system.” “To advance above three hundred debased

field Negroes, who had never before moved without the whip, to a state nearly resembling that of contented, honest and industrious servants; and, after paying them for their labour, to tripple, in a few years, the annual net clearance of his estates—these were great achievements, for an aged man, in an untried field of improvement, pre-occupied by inveterate vulgar prejudices. He has indeed accomplished all that was really doubtful or difficult in the undertaking; and perhaps all that is at present desirable, either to owner or slave. For he has ascertained as a fact, what was before only known to the learned as a theory, and to practical men as a paradox:—that the paying of slaves for their labour, does actually produce a very great profit to their owners."

Adjourned.

November 29th.

The Convention met, pursuant to adjournment.

Delegates present:

From Pennsylvania—Thomas Shipley, Abraham L. Pennock, Benjamin C. Parvin, and Thomas Earle.

From Delaware—John Reynolds and Evan Lewis.

From Chester County—Lea Pusey and William Jackson, Jun.

From Providence—Thomas Hazard.

From New-York—Peter A. Jay, Dr. John Stearns, Hiram Ketchum, Isaac M. Ely, and Goold Brown.

The committee appointed to prepare a Circular Address, produced a draft, which, with some amendments, was approved, and adopted.

On motion, *Resolved*, unanimously, that the thanks of this Convention be presented to the Select Council of Philadelphia, and to the Mayor, Aldermen, and Commonalty of the city of New-York, for the use of their respective Council Chambers.

On motion, *Resolved*, unanimously, that the thanks of this Convention be returned to the Vice President, Evan Lewis, for the attention, propriety, and ability, with which he has presided over the meetings of this Convention.

On motion, *Resolved*, that the minutes of the proceedings of this Convention, together with the Circular Address, be referred to the acting committee for publication.
Adjourned, sine die.

Attest,
GOOLD BROWN, } Secretaries.

CIRCULAR ADDRESS.

To the Abolition and Manumission Societies in the United States of America.

At the close of the session of 1821, the American Convention deem it proper to address you on the important subjects which have occupied our attention.

In reviewing the labours of Abolition Societies in this country, we find much reason for congratulation. The cause of truth and humanity has regularly advanced, in the minds of an enlightened community; and nothing but perseverance, in presenting this subject to the public in its appropriate simplicity, is requisite to promote its triumphant march over the prejudice, hostility, and opposition of its enemies. To the perseverance of its advocates alone, may be imputed the great change in the public opinion, in favour of the Abolition of Slavery, that has already been effected in the Northern, Middle, and some of the Western States: and we confidently hope, that this will ultimately produce a similar change in the South. We therefore trust, that you will never relax your efforts to promote the emancipation of slaves, till every human being in the United States, shall equally enjoy all the blessings of our free constitution.

The best mode of effecting the abolition of slavery, so as to promote the interests and the happiness of the slave, and to be satisfactory to the master, is a subject of difficult solution ; and one that has much engaged the attention of the Convention. However desirable a total emancipation might be to the philanthropist, we cannot expect the speedy accomplishment of that event.

Although the subject of colonizing the free blacks, has been repeatedly considered and disapproved by former Conventions ; it has been revived, fully discussed, and, as we trust, definitively decided by this, that such a colony, either in Africa or in our own country, would be incompatible with the principles of our government, and with the temporal and spiritual interests of the blacks.

How far voluntary emigration to Hayti should be encouraged, is a question which we do not possess sufficient information to decide ; but which may receive much additional light from the correspondence already directed to be instituted for that purpose. We think it worthy of consideration, how far any measure should be recommended that may tend to draw from our country the most industrious, moral, and respectable of its coloured population, and thus deprive others, less improved, of the benefit of their example and advice.

Deeply injured as they have been by the whites, the coloured people certainly claim from us some degree of retributive justice. And if our efforts succeed in improving their intellectual and moral condition, and in imparting to them a correct knowledge of the only true God, we shall do much towards compensating them for all the wrongs they have sustained. This object can be best attained by their permanent residence in a Christian country, and under suitable moral and religious instruction.

Influenced by a conviction of this truth, our attention has been directed to a gradual melioration of their condi-

tion, and to the adoption of such measures as will conduce to their elevation to a higher rank in society. We conceive that these objects may be promoted, by giving the slaves an interest in the soil they cultivate, by placing them in relation to their masters, in a situation somewhat similar to that in which the peasantry of Russia are placed in relation to their landlords.

This plan has been successfully executed by an extensive planter in Barbadoes; and it was found to conduce essentially to the promotion of his interests, and the moral and industrious habits of his slaves. Should our southern planters be induced to adopt a similar course, there is no doubt, that the result would be equally favourable.

We think it particularly desirable, that the legislatures of the slave-holding states, should be induced to fix a period after which all who are born of slaves shall be free. This is an object which we ought never to lost sight of, until it is attained. Although this period should be remote, and therefore no benefit be afforded to the present generation, yet an inestimable benefit would thus be ensured to posterity.

Signed on behalf, and by order of the American Convention, held at New-York, the 29th of November, 1821,